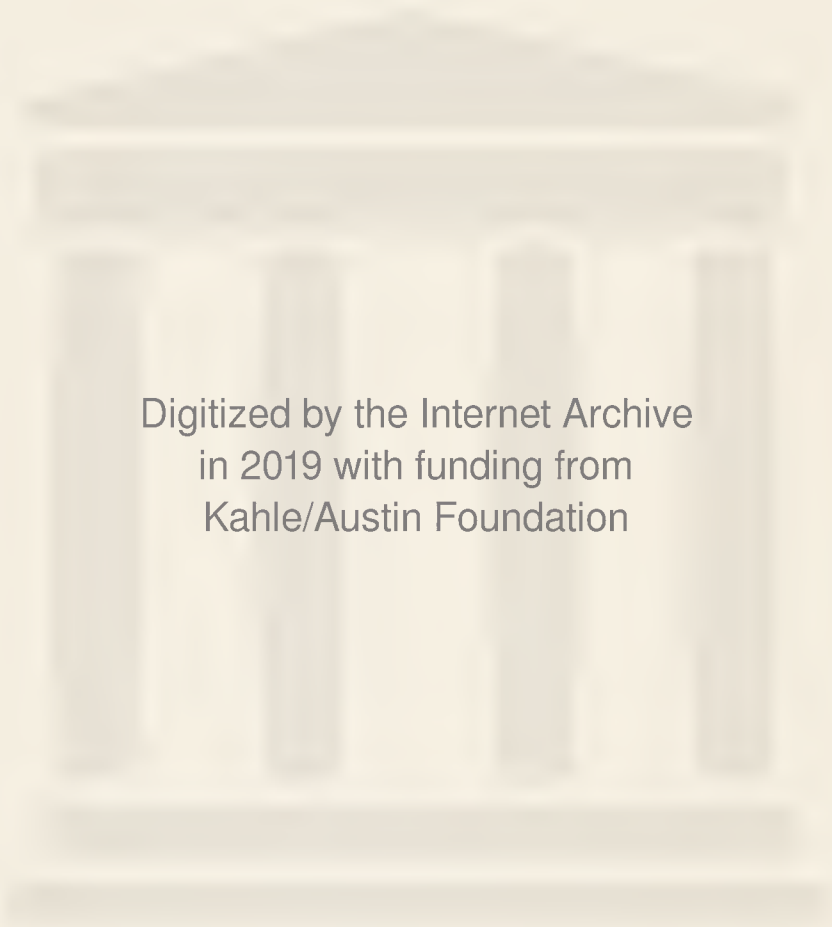

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THE DANGERS OF OBEDIENCE

& Other Essays

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by

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THE DANGERS OF OBEDIENCE

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THE DANGERS OF OBEDIENCE

THE DANGERS OF OBEDIENCE

Stationary societies, Sir Henry Maine has said, are distinguished from progressive by the degree to which they are bound down by traditional codes of behavior. The savage dare not break the cake of custom; and cases have been known in which the quite accidental infringement of some sacred taboo has been followed by the death from terror of the hapless offender. Western civilization, however, owes its main triumphs to its habit of experimenting with taboos. It owes its discoveries to men who, in some special realm, have been deliberately skeptical about its orthodoxies. The preservation of avenues through which originality may flow is the condition upon which our well-being depends. For a variety of causes, of which the application of science to the conquest of nature is the most important, has made ours an ever-changing environment. We have constantly to adapt ourselves to novelty. Our habits are invaded by novelty which compels their adjustment to a new perspective. To keep an open mind, to be dubious about whatever

tradition may insist upon as absolute, to insist that our private experience is of importance in determining social values—these are qualities upon which the prospect of a full life depends. Once men suspect the value of originality they suppress it; and the consequence of suppression is the stationary society, with its dull uniformity, in which all sense of individuality is lost.

Yet there is a growing habit among us of looking with doubt upon those who desert the beaten track. Babbitt is king; and we live increasingly a life in which conventional uniformities of conduct can be deserted only with danger. There are ideas everyone is expected to hold. There are books everyone is expected to praise. There are ways of life which correspond to every grade of income. At one level, the gramophone is a necessary index to respectability. At another, we demand a drawing-room in which unwanted visitors may be received at stated intervals. At another level still a motor car is essential if we are to win the respect of our neighbors. No poor man but will be condemned for reckless extravagance if he collects books or pictures. No millionaire but will be charged with avarice unless he buys Rembrandts or endows universities.

To deviate from the norm is to risk the mark of Cain. It is disloyalty to clan or creed, to state or class. An Englishman must not doubt the necessity of British naval supremacy. A Frenchman must assert that the occupation of the Rhineland is the clue to European well-being. An American has no right to skepticism about the Constitution or the Monroe Doctrine. Obedience, indeed, to certain expected canons of behavior has become the condition of material well-being. Universities search for safe professors. Banks desire governors who admit no doubts upon the gold standard. Churches are distressed by priests who show less interest in efficient administration than in Christianity. Divergence from the beaten track has become permissible only to those whose genius can no longer be denied; and, even then, we less welcome the divergence than accept it as the price of a divine madness. We are the slaves of custom, and we have begun to hug our chains.

For unwonted opinion or behavior is dangerous. It shocks men out of the accustomed grooves. It leads to the examination of basic principle, and that, in its turn, to the sense that contemporary institutions are not inevitable or final institutions. It is felt, accordingly, that the lines of conformity

must be rigorously drawn; to depart from them is to outrage the conscience of our fellows. Lawyers were horrified when Mr. Roosevelt demanded the recall of judges, though nothing is more necessary than a remaking of the legal system. Baptists were enraged when children heard of Darwinism; though it showed a sorry confidence in the rightness of their own creed to fear that the timid suggestions of a school-teacher might jeopardize its safety. Italian Fascists will not tolerate skepticism about Mussolini; and Bolshevists will not permit deviation from the orthodoxy of Karl Marx. Broadly speaking, it is necessary for the business man to insist that socialism is the inevitable creed of the unsuccessful; and most Catholics condemn birth-control passionately without even an examination of its possibilities. We live in such terror of the new or the unexpected that to welcome them is regarded as proof of original sin.

We demand from men that they should follow the herd; we suspect them if they express doubts of the tradition. We choose as governors available men; which means that we deliberately prefer those who have not displayed a skepticism of convention. No English statesman could continue to lead his party if he announced a doubt of the

virtues of monarchical government. No American candidate for the presidency could, without certainty of defeat, explain that he disliked the presidential system. A bishop who proposed experiment with Judge Lindsey's heresies could not long remain within the folds of his Church. It is, of course, true that in realms where no social consequence seems likely to follow from a new outlook it is permitted as an amiable weakness; but let it once touch a vested interest and penalties immediately follow. American Protestantism is horrified at the Bolshevist persecution of religion; but no small part of its adherents display the same frame of mind when they conclude that Mr. Smith's Catholicism ought to debar him from the presidency. The demand seems to grow that people shall not diverge from certain accepted habits. There is constant assimilation to the type bred by the acceptance of those habits. And the greater the assimilation, the more monstrous do deviations from the type become. The punishments, accordingly, that they involve, at the point where they imply social significance, seem definitely to increase in severity.

Sacco and Vanzetti were punished not for the murder they denied, but for the anarchism they

professed. We have replaced medieval intolerance of religious by intolerance of political and economic creeds. The state has become in sober fact Leviathan; and millions of men and women accept its decisions without scrutiny as obliging them merely because of the source from which they emanate. Our danger, indeed, is that the conventional is becoming the infallible. We do not experiment with ourselves. We check our impulses at their birth lest they involve us in departures from the norm. We preach incessantly that we are not responsible for the acts of governments which live by our consent. Lynching in the South, a massacre at Amritsar, the martyrdom of Mooney, the hapless fate of those whom the newfangled European dictatorships destroy—these move us comparatively little, and, at best, to a passing verbal protest. An acceptance of injustice to others is the price we pay, and are prepared to pay, for our own safety. We have an inner sense that, were we to protest, the tale of tragedy might be told also of ourselves; and we repress instinctive sympathy with those who suffer because our neighbors do likewise. Yet silence is acquiescence; and a failure to protest against injustice only

makes us the less vigilant against invasion of our freedom.

II

For freedom means self-expression, and the secret of freedom is courage. No man ever remains free who acquiesces in what he knows to be wrong. His business as a citizen is to act upon the instructed judgment of his conscience. He may be mistaken; but he ought ceaselessly to be aware that the act he opposes is, after all, no more than the opinion of men who, like himself, are also fallible. The business of government is to satisfy the rational desires of citizens or, at the least, to make possible such satisfaction; and nothing is more likely to prevent the fulfilment of its purpose than silent acquiescence in the prohibition of such desires. Whenever men are silent in the face of a refusal to hear the burden of their experience it is always assumed by powerful interests that they are, in fact, silent because they have nothing to say. Not only does the habit of acquiescence transform the citizen into an inert recipient of orders whom it is difficult to rouse from lethargy; it also persuades a government that it has only to

show a bold front to secure acceptance of any commands it chooses to impose. Before attitudes such as these liberty has no chance of survival; for the eternal vigilance which is its necessary price is then wanting.

We cannot, in matters of social constitution, too often insist that there is no finality about our present arrangements. Most of the principles we cherish as fundamental have seemed immoral or monstrous at some time or place. Property, marriage, religion, education, our views upon each of these have changed often enough in the course of history, and they will change again. The business of us who have experience of their operation is to report the burden of that experience; there can be no wise legislation except upon the basis of the widest induction it is open to us to make. For the laws under which we live are someone's induction. They represent a response to someone's interpretation of social needs. If what they do contradicts our experience and our needs, it is simple folly to assume their necessary wisdom and take it for granted that we are wrong. For not only does all new truth somewhere begin in a minority of one; the courage of one man who insists upon social inadequacy heartens others to make articu-

late their burden of experience as well. It stimulates the sleeping sense of civic obligation. It leads to a sense in those who have been content with passivity, that active-minded obligation may, even though it involve discomfort, not necessarily be dishonorable. Those are always most truly citizens who insist upon bringing back our rulers to a realization of the conditions upon which their power is held.

This, let it be added, is more than ever necessary in the great state. The scale of life to-day is so vast that individual experience is lost unless it is clamantly articulate about its wants. It is, moreover, a world in which the supporters of conventional morality are anxious at all costs to legislate against the diversities of which they disapprove. These they view as sin; and they seek to clothe the old Calvinist dictatorship in new terminology in order to enjoy the luxury of suppression. The books we are to read, the plays we are to see, the pictures to be exhibited, all these must be molded in the pattern of which they approve. Taboos built on their clamant expression of what they desire never cease to proliferate. And every time they are successful, their appetite grows for power. Mr. Comstock began in a humble way;

but he ended by sweeping a continent into his vision. Sir William Joynson-Hicks now pronounces with confidence his judgment upon every subject from the proper closing hours of night clubs to the governmental limits within which the Anglican Church may live a life of its own. Their impudence is the measure of our futility. Their self-expression is purchased by the suppression of ours.

That, indeed, is the invariable nature of power. The law of its being is to hate the process of rational examination. It will not, unless it must, brook criticism of its pronouncements. It assumes the coincidence of its private will with the public good. And it evokes everywhere imitation. Mussolini takes a leaf out of Lenin's book. Italian acquiescence in the suppression of freedom persuades Spain to similar action. The European continent to-day is scattered with petty tyrannies each one of which has built itself upon the citizen's conviction that he has no alternative save helplessly to obey the commands he receives. All over the world little groups of active-minded men run to the state to urge that some particular convention be made binding upon us all, or to prohibit some particular experiment which, a generation

from now, may well become a normal habit of everyday life. And the world runs to meet its chains because the citizen is too afraid to venture out of the little private corner in which he is buried. He does not seem to know that the power to insist upon his freedom lies in his own hands. He is powerless because he is unconscious of his power.

So great is the decline of liberty, by reason of this acquiescence, that the citizen to-day is notable who protests against injustice. He is not only notable, but even bizarre; we tend to wonder that he has so little to do that he must interfere in public concerns. When Professor Chafee ventured to defend the rights of Americans to freedom of speech there were Harvard alumni anxious for his removal from the university. When Professor Frankfurter expressed his doubts about the guilt of Sacco and Vanzetti powerful interests were not slow to whisper that he must have received a price for his forthrightness. We expect the statesman, the millionaire, the soldier to announce what organization of life is to be imposed; but when the ordinary citizen speaks we are either amazed at his courage or indignant at his intrusion. Yet, after all it is the ordinary citizen who is most

likely to be affected by the imposition of other men's experience. The government of to-day defines with increasing precision the contours of the life he may lead. Unless he is prepared to announce his judgment upon their decision, to concert with others some corporate insistence upon his views, the life permitted him may well become one long frustration of his personal desires.

Nor must we forget the unnecessary pain that results from our unwillingness to engage in public adventure. The indifference of American citizens has meant that Mooney has languished in jail for sixteen years; the indifference of English citizens has meant eighteen grim years of imprisonment for that Oscar Slater whom the Scottish Courts have recently pronounced not guilty of the crime for which he suffered. An unwillingness on our part to confront with frankness the issues of sex means innumerable unhappy lives that might otherwise have been fruitful. Our acquiescence in an eighteenth-century view of freedom of contract enables the American courts to deprive of essential leisure thousands of working men who might, otherwise, share in the gain as well as in the toil of living. Our refusal to believe that foreign affairs are our business not less than that of the men who

sit in Washington and Westminster may well send the next generation, as it sent the last, to die on the battlefield. Yet, civilization means, above all, an unwillingness to inflict unnecessary pain. Within the ambit of that definition, those of us who heedlessly accept the commands of authority cannot yet claim to be civilized men.

III

It is said that the individual is powerless; it is merely to embrace one inadequacy for another to seek to pit himself against the state. But that is an exaggeration of the power of authority which it is urgent to deny at the outset. Luther pitted himself against the serried majesty of Rome, and, whatever the price he had to pay, at least he found a larger freedom outside. Francis Place, almost alone, won for English workingmen the right to combine for self-protection against a hostile government and an indifferent House of Commons. Samuel Plimsoll, by a persistent refusal to be silent, won for sailors a protection against maritime disaster which is perhaps their most valuable safeguard. William Lloyd Garrison may have been stoned by Boston mobs, and the

good and great may have been shocked by his intransigence; but he lit a flame in the hearts of thousands who later made possible the victory of emancipation. The very nature, indeed, of social organization may give us assurance that our protest need never be single. The injustice we lament, the command we deny, others experience also as lamentable or unjustified. They wait, often enough, for a lead; and when we refuse to act by some inner fear of failure, we leave them to accept defeat. And, by so leaving them, we reinforce the authority of those whose exercise of it appears to us unjust. Our lack of courage makes the next effort of protest more difficult to undertake.

We should, moreover, remember that one thing authority fears to encounter is the insistent conscience of its opponents. Modern governments are doubtless more powerful than at any period in the history of the world; but they are still dependent for that power on their willingness to obey the decent opinion of their subjects. President Masaryk showed in Czechoslovakia what a persistent determination to be free can effect. Arthur Griffiths and Michael Collins showed plainly enough that there is a limit to the coercion a government may employ against men who are conscious of fighting

for a great destiny. The women suffragists in England fought for eight years against a government deaf to the power of rational argument; and their willingness to pay the penalties of illegal conduct rather than acquiesce in their exclusion from effective citizenship was the major factor in the victory of their cause. Those who refused obedience to the Military Service Acts were able, in the last war, to exemplify the powerlessness of the state. Convinced of the iniquity of war, they claimed the right to be absolved from direct contact with it; and it is important that both in England and America the Quakers should have received express exemption from that contact. That is the tacit admission that where the state conflicts with another group there are occasions when the state will find it wise to forego the claim of paramountcy. And, here again, the real fact involved is that of consent. No state can act in the face of considerable opposition from its citizens, if the latter are deeply and conscientiously moved by the issue in dispute. No American government can hope to enforce Prohibition merely by multiplying the agencies of pressure and penalization; it will succeed only as men are convinced that its objective is worthy of their allegiance. No state

will venture in practice to transcend the consciences it encounters in any vital sphere. Acts of authority are always limited by their power to command the moral support of thinking men.

It is important to remember that governments are not always successful, simply because it is urgent to recollect that they are not always right. There is, that is to say, not only no certainty that they will succeed; there is even no certainty that they ought to succeed. The only ground for obedience to the state is where its purpose is morally superior to that of its opponents. The only ground upon which the citizen can give or be asked to give his support for the state is upon the conviction that what it is aiming at is, in each particular action, good. We should not support a given state because the ideal state is patterned upon Utopia. We should not even support a given state because its intentions are sincere. A catalogue of the actions of states undertaken from the highest possible motives could easily be made a list of errors now regarded as monstrous. No sincerity of purpose ever excludes the possibility of conduct for which no excuse can seriously be made. Calvin was completely sincere when he burned Servetus.

The Inquisition served the highest motives when it imprisoned Galileo. George III was unquestionably sincere in his opposition to the American colonies and to Catholic Emancipation. In politics, at any rate, it is not only necessary to will what is right, but also to know what it is right to will. It is a nice question whether more harm than good has not been done by governments who have been left unopposed because it has been conjectured that they were doing their best. The most passionate conviction of rightness is never a proof that we are not mistaken.

Nor can it be truly said that governments are usually right because they command the service of experts, while the common man has but a limited knowledge at his command. For it is in the first place essential to realize that, however expert may be the basis of the decision, this does not compensate for an inability to convince the common man of its validity. To override the judgment of the hostile and the doubtful is, in the end, to convince them that the labor of thought is not worth the effort. And it must be remembered that all experts are in matters of social action liable to the gravest defects. They are specialists in a particular theme;

and because they are expert therein, they tend to overestimate its importance. No general can ever be entrusted with the function of delimiting strategic frontiers; no admiral could safely be left to draw up a naval program. An expert, moreover, always tends to underestimate the importance of converting people to his point of view. He is so convinced that his principle is right that he rarely considers the price which may have to be paid for its administration, the possibility that its principle might well be lost in the strain of applying it. Only the need to consider the necessity of consent prevents an expert from becoming a tyrant. We wisely leave amateur politicians to control the expert that the latter may learn the limits of public patience.

It is said, again, that to ask the citizen to become a pioneer is to ask him to embark upon adventures doomed, almost inevitably, to fail. A man, it is argued, who can school himself into acquiescence with things as they are will have, on the whole, a not unhappy life; but one who seeks to protest against injustice, or to work for the acceptance of truths rejected by the powers that be, embarks upon a voyage where he can be certain that his

ship will be wrecked. The authority of existing interests is so strong that it is folly to rebel against their compulsion. The price of rebellion is martyrdom, and not even martyrdom has any assurance of ultimate reward. Social problems, we are told, must be seen in reasonable proportion. We have our own happiness to achieve; we are not, in any case, our brother's keeper. What profit does a man have who sets himself up for Athanasius? It is rare that his powers are equal to his self-appointed task. He will earn only bitterness and disappointment from effort of which the world is careless or hostile. Those whom he loves will, only too often, pay the price of his sacrifice to his conscience. His spiritual urgency will, to the generality, seem no more than a special form of egotism or stubbornness. Humanity, in history, has always crucified its pioneers.

The plea for inertia is always a powerful one. It enables us to plow our little furrow without an impending sense of contingent disaster. It saves us from the grim need to revise habits it is always dangerous to examine and, sometimes, fatal to destroy. Yet it can be said with certainty that the price of inertia is always, in the long run, the loss

of a civic sense in the multitude. Men who insist that some particular injustice is not their responsibility sooner or later become unable to resent any injustice. Tyranny depends upon nothing so much as the lethargy of a people. Autocracy is born above all of the experience that it need not expect active resentment against injustice. This is the inner truth of Thoreau's famous sentence that "under a government which imprisons any unjustly, the true place for a just man is also a prison." For unless he is insistently protestant, his acquiescence in the injustice is assumed. His silence makes him in fact the jailer; and the powers that be rely on him because they know that the inert acceptance he has displayed in the past is a proof that his conscience is dead. The bad employer, the savage justice, the corrupt statesman, these exercise their authority only because they have not been challenged in the past. Let that challenge once be made forthrightly and, where one man has been bold, a thousand are prepared to follow him. And where a thousand are prepared to follow, those whose profession is the doing of wrong think twice before they act. A people attentive to the confines within which power must act have alone the prospect of free-

dom. The unjust only prevail because they are never guilty of inertia.

IV

It is objected that this is a doctrine of anarchy. If men are to disobey because they disbelieve, there is, it is said, an end of social peace; and in a period of violence it is never justice that triumphs. To argue, therefore, that a man must act upon the dictates of his conscience, to insist that there are times when the law may be rightly disregarded, is to attack the foundations of public well-being. We must approach the state in fear and trembling. We must remember that its habits, its traditions, its purposes are born of the inherited wisdom of the past. Who are we, it is said, with what Burke called "our little stock of reason," to pit our judgment against the immense induction for which it stands?

The argument has the appearance of power; but, in fact, it is wholly void of substance. The present conditions are not just merely because they are the present conditions; they are just to the degree that justice is inherent in them. An American would not condemn Washington for 1776;

few Frenchmen would doubt the justice of 1789; fewer Englishmen would deny the common sense of 1688. But Washington and all other revolutionaries have had, at some moment, to make the decision to disobey; and the decision has involved the judgment that their view of the future must be pitted against that for which traditional authority has declared. Obviously enough, we must make our protest proportionate to the event. We need not march out with machine guns because the income-tax inspector has assessed us wrongly. But if the state to which we are reduced is that of the French peasant in 1789, or the Russian peasant in 1917, it is difficult to see why the wisdom of our ancestors should be dignified by the name of wisdom. Social peace need not be invaded for minutiæ; but social peace may well be purchased at too high a price. Order may be disturbed; but there are kinds of order which are closely akin to death.

Government is necessary enough in all conscience; but there must be limits to its empire. It is not enough within a social system to proclaim the supreme desirability of peace until we are satisfied with the purposes for which peace is made. And because the individual is so small, the

power of government so vast, we may be certain enough that, in general, organized disobedience is always the price of injustice. Men do not revolt until wrong has driven them to revolt. They are not the prey of agitators unless they have so suffered that the agitator's message transcends for them all other considerations. The danger of anarchy, in a word, is born only when a body of men has come to feel that some wrong imposed upon them has become unendurable.

It is futile, moreover, to argue that there is no longer unendurable wrong. The supreme instance may clothe itself in the humblest garb. It may appear, as with Dreyfus, in the garb of an army officer falsely accused of espionage; or, as with Francisco Ferrer, in the person of a humble school teacher falsely condemned for treason. Our business when we meet such wrong is to challenge it lest authority be victorious over justice. For the price of our freedom is an ultimate courage to resist. We owe no state or church a blind or unreasoning obedience. We owe it only the utmost insight of which our judgment is capable. No state is ever securely founded save in the consciences of its citizens. No state, indeed, has ever a better safeguard against error than respect for

those consciences. To treat them as trivial, to regard activity built upon them as moral wrong, is to injure itself far more than it can be injured by them. To know that they have quality of spirit enough to insist upon the lesson inherent for them in their experience of life is already some justification of its effort. To suppress that spirit is to deny its own purpose. Thereby it lends itself not to the enlargement of personality, but to its suppression. That, after all, is the ultimate crime in the historic record.

For no government can, in the long run, ever find an adequate substitute for the individual exercise of active minds. However wide the ambit of its experience, it is never so wide as the totality of civic experience. However well-intentioned, it is always liable, from the necessary limitations of all authority, to error and misjudgment. Its quality, in the end, is never at a higher level than the quality of the humblest of its citizens. Once it postpones consideration of some judgment he makes, it postpones also the increase of its own quality. For to suppress individuality is to diminish it; and the outcome of continuous diminution is the slave-mind. States have perished in history not because they could not conceive great ends,

but because their passion for uniformity has deprived them of the instruments necessary to carry out those ends. High purposes in any community require citizens high-minded enough to appreciate them; and men who have been modelled to a pattern are incapable of intellectual stature. Men whose minds have been put in fetters cannot exert that energy of the soul which is the motive power of great achievement.

V

If all the laws of social organization were as patently reasonable as those of arithmetic, it would not, perhaps, be necessary to plead for tolerance. But no honesty is possible in matters of social constitution unless we begin by admitting that no faith is really possible in the realm of politics without a large margin of doubt. There is hardly a single certitude in the past which a wider and deeper experience has not rendered untenable. There is not a single certitude to-day which will not, to the future, appear meager and inadequate. Implacable hostility by government to diversity of opinion is simply the prevention of rational judgment. Sacco and Vanzetti did not cease to be

anarchists because anarchy was penalized; the government of Russia before 1917 did not destroy the Bolshevists by sending them to Siberia. Ideas however foolish, programs however extreme, are always born of some want which their exponents are seeking to satisfy. To penalize the ideas and the programs does not stifle the wants. Either it drives them underground or provokes them into rebellion. A government which encounters bad ideas—even more, a government which provokes rebellion has, almost always, reason to look into its own conscience. For its business is response to the felt wants of men, and their disobedience to it is the measure of its failure.

This warning was never more needed than in our time. Power tends increasingly to be concentrated in a few hands. A standardized machine-technology degrades the craftsman more and more to a man who fulfils a purely repetitive routine. The press, education, the discipline of political parties remove increasingly from circumference to center the responsibility for thought. In Russia we have the spectacle of a dominant party which seeks to impress a particular creed upon every aspect of the life it controls; and a generation is rapidly coming to manhood there which will have

heard of no other. The same is true in only slightly less degree of Italy and of Spain. There government arrogates to itself the character of infallibility, and a doctrine born of a particular occasion is made a universal of which doubt is not permitted. Yet it is obvious enough that truth cannot be stabilized in this fashion. Not even Marx exhausted the possibility that new truth may await us in the realm of social ideas.

Russia, Italy, and Spain, indeed, are only extreme instances of an attitude which other states are seeking to enforce less directly and with a subtler power of permeation. Industrial standardization seeks to make men live increasingly within the ambit of patterns it finds most economically serviceable; and the cost of that search is the standardized mind. Like Russian communism, it develops its protective legend. Most American business men seriously believe that America has attained the ideal of free competition; all English business men with adequate incomes insist that the career is open to the talented. Each sedulously preaches that failure is inherent in the capacity of the individual; and a new Calvinism arises in which poverty is equated with moral fault. This has become very largely the religion of the Western World;

and because it is the gospel of the successful man, it is preached in school and newspaper until doubt of its truth seems to the majority like doubt of the multiplication table. At that stage, doubt itself becomes an index either to insanity or bad character. To ask a man in a court of law to-day if he is a socialist is to suggest to the judge and jury that he is incapable of good citizenship. He must be prepared to accept Leviathan at Leviathan's own estimate if he wishes for the approval of his fellows.

That road lies stagnation, and the consequence of stagnation in ideas is always the decay of freedom. It is extraordinary enough that in the twentieth century it should be necessary to restate the case for freedom. Generation by generation, in religion, politics, science, the arts, men have had manifold experience of the disaster consequent upon suppression of the human spirit. Age by age they have been re-taught that nothing ultimately matters save maintenance of the conditions which make for the emancipation of personality. Our business, if we desire to live a life not utterly devoid of meaning and significance, is to accept nothing which contradicts our basic experience merely because it comes to us from tradition or convention or authority. It may well be that we

shall be wrong; but our self-expression is thwarted at the root unless the certainties we are asked to accept coincide with the certainties we experience. That is why the condition of freedom in any state is always a widespread and consistent skepticism of the canons upon which power insists. To doubt is to examine and, with distinguished minds, to examine is to discover. But it is not merely for the value of the new truth that may emerge that we urge the importance of skepticism. The meek do not inherit the earth unless they are prepared to fight for their meekness. Justice does not come to reign unless those who care for its coming are prepared to insist upon its value. Certainly every acquiescence in contradiction of the lesson life has taught us is a deliberate postponement of its opportunity; every acceptance of that against which our soul cries out makes it easier upon another occasion to stifle that cry. We need freedom to be ourselves. But we can be free only as we insist upon freedom. No other person's creed can have validity for us save as it expresses the exigencies of our own life.

Because we share, that is, in a collective experience, we are not effortlessly assured of individual salvation. We do our duty by examination, not by

submission, by zeal for truth, not enthusiasm for uniformity. Nothing can ever entitle us, as free spiritual beings, to merge our lives into the common life, to disown our personality, and accept standards which, within ourselves, we know to be worthless. A healthy loyalty is not passive and complacent, but active and critical. If it finds ground for attack, it must occupy that ground. For all obedience that has the right to regard itself as ethical is built upon a conscious agreement with the purpose we encounter. Anything else is a betrayal of ourselves; and when we surrender the truth we see, by that betrayal we betray also the future of civilization. For the triumphs of a free conscience are the landmarks on the road to the ideal.

THE AMERICAN POLITICAL SYSTEM

No political system has ever been so vehemently assailed as that of the United States; nor is there any upon which criticism has produced so small an effect. Its large outlines have hardly altered since Bagehot, some sixty years ago, analyzed its deficiencies with a subtlety and penetration which remain unsurpassed. Yet there seem no signs that a foreign observer can detect which indicate any widespread desire for alteration. The constitution as a body of working rules is still, for the average American, too remote from his daily vocation to arouse a profound interest. The very prosperity of America tends to make him belittle their significance. So few politicians have anything like a national significance, so many are politicians because they have failed in other walks of life, that the inhabitant of Main Street is easily tempted to venerate where it seems an extravagant luxury to comprehend.

Yet, if we assume that democratic government is desirable, there is hardly a canon of institutional

adequacy against which the American system does not offend. It is desirable that the source of responsibility for governmental error or wrong should be clear and unmistakable; the American system so disperses responsibility that its detection is approximately impossible. It is urgent that the working of institutions should be conducted in the perspective of discussion which educates and clarifies the public mind; but the essential tasks of operation in America are almost wholly concealed from the public view. It is important that the occupants of high office should be chosen upon the basis of ability and experience; yet both the President and his cabinet are selected by a process which, if it resembles anything, is akin to a dubious lottery. A governmental system, moreover, should be sensitive to the opinion of its constituents, and maximize the opportunity of translating a coherent body of doctrine into statute; yet it seems the purpose of American institutions deliberately to avoid that sensitiveness, on the one hand, and to prevent the making of coherent policy upon the other.

America is the most prosperous of modern states; and its riches conceal from the public view the cost of its institutional inadequacy. It has hardly emerged from planning the development

of a continent; and the possibilities of its natural resources have served to obscure the price it may one day have to pay for neglect of the elementary maxims of good government. For the test of a system comes only in times of crisis, and since the attainment of permanent unity no problems of European magnitude have had to be faced. Yet the permanent hold of the Democratic party upon the South, the deliberate refusal of much that is best in American life to think of a political career, a financial system that, both upon the side of supply and estimate, is a woeful absurdity, the almost total failure to conserve natural resources, the invisible stranglehold of wealth upon the two great parties—these are only some of the major consequences of the system now in being. America, in fact, is applying eighteenth-century ideas and institutions to the problems of a twentieth-century civilization. Prosperity may postpone the gathering of the harvest; but one day, assuredly, a new generation will reap its fruit.

II

It is worth while to apply these hypotheses to the institutions themselves in detail. The Presidency is the most outstanding, for it has become

the most powerful lever of authority there is in the modern world. Yet what is startling about its character is the haphazard way in which its occupant is chosen. An English Prime Minister serves a long apprenticeship before he reaches the pinnacle of a political career. Mr. Gladstone was thirty-five—Disraeli thirty years—in the House of Commons before he was so chosen; both had been for long years essential figures in public life whose qualities had long been tested in the House of Commons. Even Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Baldwin, who arrived at power through accident, had been members of Parliament for nearly twenty years. And each was able to retain office only on the exacting condition of being able to satisfy in debate a legislative assembly deliberately designed to maximize the consequence of his mistakes.

The American President is in no such position. No one knows who he is to be. He is only too often the product of a series of accidents in which what is most important is not his possession of quality or of ideas but public ignorance about him. He may well be quite unknown to the nation; he may even, like Mr. Roosevelt or President Coolidge, become President by the act of Heaven instead of by the choice of the American people. He

has to assume the leadership of a party without, at least necessarily, being trained to that delicate function. He has to influence a legislative assembly where each chamber is active and powerful; and, at the worst, he may have a majority in neither, or, at the best, be compelled to purchase acceptance of his policy by shifts and expedients which destroy its logic or weaken its application. He has never any assurance that his will must prevail. He lacks the exhilarating experience of defending his policy in the full light of day. He has not grown up in fellowship with the instruments he has to use; and the knowledge that a second term is almost certainly the maximum period of leadership does not make for that continuity of allegiance to him upon which the shaping of a great policy depends. He has even to gamble in a large degree upon the quality of his cabinet associates; and since they are rather his servants than his colleagues, he must inevitably bear the burden of their mistakes. Because, moreover, the tradition has made the main embassies the reward of service in his election, he will be compelled to rely upon a diplomacy largely amateur in character; no American ambassador

in Europe in 1914 had any previous experience of foreign affairs. He has to accept the personnel of Congress through which he must seek to work it; and, even then, he may find that the election in mid-term destroys the men whom he employs. Nor is this all. His period of office is so short that he has hardly become used to its exercise before he is driven to think of reëlection; and if he is attracted by this notion, the price he must pay in complaisance and bargain will be well-nigh intolerable. And even if he is successful in forcing a policy upon Congress, he may well find that the exigencies of the spoils system, improved though it has been of recent years, fail to give him the instruments which might secure its successful application.

This, at least, is the logic of the system; and it is not an adequate defense of its deficiencies to urge that, despite them, men like Lincoln and Cleveland and Wilson have all been Presidents in the last seventy years. The fact is that anyone who studies in detail even the greatest of Presidential careers can hardly but be convinced that the necessary result of its environment is to minimize the best qualities of the occupant. He is fet-

tered where he should be free; he is set apart where he should be in the midst. The absence of a clear organic relation between him and the legislature erodes his power while it destroys legislative responsibility. The rigidity of the system in which he is enclosed, the knowledge that his power is fugitive, the checks and balances which surround him on every hand, these serve only to illustrate the basic thesis that the separation of powers is the confusion of powers. No executive in the world disposes of greater authority; no executive, either, is so deliberately or perversely hampered in its fruitful exercise.

Nor is the position of an American Cabinet member so much more attractive. It is only by presidential favor that he attains his office. Service to the party, outstanding ability, long experience in affairs, none of these things give him a prescriptive right to his position. He is a personal nomination of his master. He can make his policy effective only as he convinces the President on the one hand or placates Congress on the other. Resounding success may bring him no credit if President or Congress be jealous; and he has nothing to hope for from the prospect of resignation. Nothing, indeed,

in the context of the cabinet has been more significant in recent years than the fact that Colonel House was able to do more than any member of the Cabinet of his time without finding it necessary to assume office. For the work of a Cabinet member is too little in the public view to count in any final way. Like a sudden tempest, they are come and gone. To occupy a place gives no lien on the gratitude of the party. The relationship to Congress is too tenuous and indirect to make it easy for them to impinge at all concretely on the public. A few men, like Mr. Hay and Mr. Root, have been significant in modern times; but, in general, neither long experience nor outstanding qualities have been necessary for the tenure of Cabinet office. The requirements of sectionalism, moreover, act as a deterrent to possible aspirants; the need to represent the West may check the ambition of youthful ability in New York or Cleveland long before Cabinet office has become an object of conscious desire. The process of selection is far too haphazard; the prospect offers no such measure of reasonable certainty as parliamentary systems afford. The power of the office, moreover, is only dubiously attractive as against

some of the alternative political positions. A Senator, for instance, need never resign in order to express dissent; and where he differs he can speak from one of the few political platforms in America to which attention is paid. But a Cabinet member in retirement is, with rare exceptions, one of the unburied dead; and it is seldom that public opinion desires his emergence from the tomb.

Much, doubtless, would be altered if, as so many have desired, the Cabinet member were to speak upon the floor of Congress. But, in that event, the whole character of the American system would necessarily change. For the articulation of the Cabinet with the legislative assembly would compel the development in America of parliamentary government. Today it is impossible to assess the qualities of a good American Cabinet official. But if he were to sit in Congress, even to the limited extent that Chief Justice Taft has desired,[1] the basis upon which he is selected would have to be completely changed. The ability to speak, the grasp of the subject, the knowledge of men, the instinct for administration, all these would become at once essential qualities. An out-

[1] *Our Chief Magistrate*, pp. 31-32.

standing Secretary in Congress would immediately challenge the position of the President himself. Collective Cabinet responsibility would automatically develop; and the resignation of a Secretary whose authority in Congress was recognized would have important consequences upon the administration and its policy. The habit of debate in the House of Representatives would be restored, and, with its restoration, there would be both an increase in the significance of opposition, and a growth of public interest in the process of politics. A Secretary charged with corruption, like Mr. Daugherty or Mr. Fall, would have to meet his accusers face to face—a fact which would, at a stroke, raise the level of political morality in America. Such a development as this, of course, is contrary to the whole tradition of the American system; and the possibility of its occurrence is obviously remote if only because, in a period of calm, peoples can rarely be persuaded to prepare themselves for times of storm. Yet it would be a service if an American statesman of authority were to remind his people how largely the present system was born of accident; had Madison and Jefferson taken a different view of Hamilton the lines

of institutional evolution in America might have moved swiftly towards a neo-parliamentary form.

III

To any critical observer trained in the legislative experience of France and England, the House of Representatives must necessarily seem unworthy of a great people. It commits every fault against which the canons of political science can utter warning. The first business of a legislature is to illuminate great principles in debate; but the House has long since ceased so to discuss public questions that the electorate can be persuaded to follow their analysis. Its essential proceedings should be conducted in the public view; but the main work of the House is done in the dark recesses of committee-rooms whence only rumor and legend emerge for the edification of the press. A legislature should be so organized that the opponents of government have a clear and full opportunity to make their case against its policy. But the deliberate purpose of the organization of the House is to reduce opposition to a speechless nullity. The private member of the House of Commons is already a sufficiently pathetic figure;

but he is a giant by the side of the American representative. For the rule of residence starts by limiting the political stature of most American representatives to that of natural parish councilors; while the shortness of the term and the amazing complexities of Congressional procedure mean inevitably that before the congressman has begun to master his work the grim problem of reëlection confronts him. His quality, too, necessarily deteriorates under local pressure. A congressman cannot attain a perspective about national issues if his constant thought must be about patronage in, and appropriations for, his district. When he arrives at Washington, there awaits him no creative opportunity. The chance to sit on a committee with no big issues to debate, the prospect of introducing bills which will never be reported, the opportunity to write speeches that will rarely be delivered—these are not horizons towards which an able man will strain.

The proper commentary upon the system is the simple fact that most congressmen are unsuccessful lawyers. Even if they stay long in their seats—and the degree of congressional wastage is startling—the career that awaits them is not a very attractive one. Very occasionally, with McKinley, it is a path

to the Presidency, or more frequently, to a senatorship; but, in general, it is a life filled with frustrations. No congressman has ever exercised the influence over the nation that Bright or Cobden did in England; nor does he make the impact on public opinion of an eminent educator like Dr. C. W. Eliot or a rich manufacturer like Henry Ford. As a career, indeed, or a source of influence, it is not unfair to describe the House of Representatives as a refuge for the mediocre in national politics.

The Senate is a very different institution. With the Supreme Court, it has been the outstanding success in the American system. Its numbers remain small enough to give individuality to its members and to make possible a debate that is almost always real and not seldom instructive. It has real and coherent authority through its power to ratify treaties and to share with the President in the making of appointments; though the recent decision of the Supreme Court in the Myers case has done something towards rendering ineffective the real value of the appointing power. The members of the Senate have a long enough term to enable them, if they can, to create a sense of their personalities among the electorate. They are thus

able, as congressmen have never been able, to act as the embodiment of ideas. Webster, Calhoun, La Follette, Senator Borah, have all been able, in their very different ways, to make the Senate a platform from which to mold the opinion of the nation. A senator, moreover, just because the area of election from which he is drawn is wider, tends to be a more considerable person than a congressman. He plays, as a rule, a much bigger part in his state; Calhoun and South Carolina, Wisconsin and La Follette, were, for years, almost interchangeable terms. He tends, also, to be a person of real significance in the party. He can shape its destinies in a way hardly open to members of the House.

Not, indeed, that the Senate as an institution is free from grave defects. Its very power—greater than any other legislature possesses—makes it a rival to the President; and it too often yields to the temptation to destroy the coherency of legislation as an exercise in the use of power. Its authority has too often drawn to it men notable either for the wealth they desire to protect or the corrupt state-machine they are anxious to preserve. It stands a little stiffly on its dignity; and this too often makes it both debate for the mere joy of debating and legislate without due regard to the

facts involved in its measures. It is altogether free from that grave defect which brings the new House of Representatives into being long after public opinion about its character may have changed; but it suffers gravely from the fact that the system of partial renewal—while it makes, of course, for stability—prevents it from being subject to a total expression of popular judgment. Where, therefore, as is frequently the case, it is at odds with the President, the latter has no real opportunity of forcing matters to a decisive issue at the polls. The time-table is always on the Senate's side. And this inevitably means that the Senate is tempted to seek a policy of its own without too close a regard to the wants or needs of the executive. Because, as a legislature, it never dies, because, also, it shares so largely in the executive power, it tends less to correct the deficiencies of the latter than to absorb its authority. Almost always it will control a weak President; almost always, also, it will destroy the effectiveness of a strong one. It is, by the definition of its place in the institutional scheme, a permanent alternative government to that of the administration; and, of this, it is the necessary consequence that Amer-

ican legislation will rarely be intelligible to those affected by its results.

IV

But the American legislature must be judged less by its internal character than by its external relations. Here, of course, the Fathers proceeded upon assumptions which, in their own day, were judged exigent; and it is difficult to blame them for a construction which Montesquieu and Blackstone had canonized. Yet today it is supremely difficult for a foreigner to understand how Americans can remain satisfied with the institutional contact between executive and legislature. Here, once more, the system offends against every reasonable canon of political science. The separation of powers means that both legislature and executive must have fixed terms. Each lives a life in large part independent of the other, a life, indeed, that may well be conceived in antagonistic terms. Neither, as a result, has an interest in the other sufficient to secure a coherent and responsible policy. The legislature cannot get the executive which it wants; the executive is never sure of a legislature to its liking. The result is to dissipate the energy

and impair the efficiency of each. The legislature never has its proper work to perform, which is to make a government to its liking; and the executive can never do its proper work of applying a policy which it fully approves. Each has a certain interest in the failure of the other. A President who always had his way with Congress would completely thwart its personality and purpose. A Congress which trampled on the President would —as the example of Andrew Johnson shows so well—make impossible a logical body of reasonable legislation. If either is to figure successfully in the public view, it must be at the expense of the other. And nothing that either can do will affect the life of the other. Each derives its power independently from the people, and each, whatever its character, must await the fixed period for a refreshment of power. The exigencies of party may, to some extent, mitigate the viciousness of the principle, but it can only obliterate in part the magnitude of the evil.

Nothing so well illustrates this radical defect as the realm of finance. In a parliamentary system, the minister has a plan and he stands or falls by it; if the legislature will not accept his proposals either it seeks a new government, or he demands a

new legislature from the people. Whatever the choice, the result is at least logical and coherent. But in the American system nothing of the kind occurs. The minister makes his proposals; he seeks to placate the chairman of the appropriate committee. But the latter, however well intentioned, will not fully endorse the ministerial plan. He is himself, to begin with, a kind of quasi-minister, with a reputation to make. He has members on his committee who must be placated in turn. The member for Jacksonville thinks that something must be done for his constituents; and the member for Lincoln was promised a new post office. When the measure has been sufficiently mangled in the House, the process will be repeated in the Senate. A thousand competing interests, rarely related to the needs of efficient administration, must be conciliated. What emerges may even, as a total, look not unlike the original proposals of the executive; but it will be rare to find that the itemized details are the same. The truth is that for every subject, from finance downwards, the United States has at least three ministers; and neither the interest, nor the point of view, of any of them is identical. And since the Cabinet lacks any collective responsibility, since the party caucus is far too

big to give integration to policy, the result is a partial chaos in all that is done. The presidential system, in brief, makes the executive and the legislature independent at exactly the point where dependence is required, and it secures their inevitable antagonism of interest where public policy requires a unity of interest. Nor can either, by the fact of independence, bring home responsibility effectively to the other. The power of punishment is outside in the nation; and the latter can speak, only not when the event requires, but when the constitution permits. But it may then be too late.

Other consequences of importance follow from this separation of Congress from the executive. No verdict can be sought from the people at a time when a verdict should be taken; and when the fixed epoch of judgment arrives events will have done much to obliterate the material upon which a verdict should be rendered. To an Englishman, for instance, it is literally incredible that no serious penalties should have been visited upon the Republican party for the scandals of the Harding administration; but it was of the essence of the American system that when the American people, as here, was wanted, it could not be found. The

result is an inevitable diminution of the popular interest in politics. The work of government requires a perspective of drama. The knowledge that grave error will precipitate a catastrophe keeps not only its members and the opposition alert, but also creates an active public opinion outside. For the latter feels that its influence may be creative. It may, by its approval or its antagonism, destroy the work in hand. It inquires into what is being done because it may affect what is being done. In America, that is only partially the case. Public opinion is special and interested rather than general and disinterested. It is a trade which wants a duty on the goods it manufactures, and the road to its wants is not through the channels of opinion but the avenue of the lobbyist. There is hardly a great subject of general import upon which an agitation in America can hope effectively to influence the government; for the maximum obtuseness on the part of the latter will not advance by one day the period of judgment at the polls.

Experience, in other words, seems to demand that the executive and the legislature should never be rivals for power. If that be the case, the mind of the public is confusion, and its confusion is destructive of its interest. Nor is that all. Their an-

tagonism means that neither can perform its work effectively; each is continually tempted into regions outside its proper competence. A strong executive either reduces Congress to the level of a formless debating society, or is himself reduced by conflict to the position of an angry, if energetic man, declaiming, like Mr. Wilson in 1919, in a vacuum of futility. A weak executive becomes, almost necessarily, the creature of Congress; and there is never sufficient integration of purpose in the latter to make it a desirable master. The main business, indeed, of a legislature cannot be performed under American conditions. For that business is to find a suitable executive which the opposition can criticize, if occasion offers, to the point of defeat. A body of some four hundred and fifty men, like the House of Representatives, or even ninety-six, like the Senate, cannot hope to interfere successfully with the administrative process. The thing is too complex and delicate for anything more than general oversight. Yet it is to this that, under the given conditions, they are perpetually tempted; and the result is that they merely irritate and hamper where they should criticize to clarify. Nor can such a body legislate if it is able to substitute anyone's proposals for

those submitted to it. Chaos is bound to result if the formal source of legislation is multiple in character. The executive ceases to be responsible because it does not create; and the legislature disavows responsibility because it does not apply. This has been the result of the American system, and increasingly the result in recent years. It is certainly difficult to reconcile its character with the possibility of adequate government.

V

A word is necessary upon what is the outstanding failure in the American federal scheme—the Vice-Presidency. Tradition here has utterly undone the original purpose of the Constitution by reducing the Electoral College to a nullity. The result has been that every Vice-President since the Civil War has been selected for reasons even worse, and more obscure, than those for which a President is chosen. No vice-presidential candidate has ever been nominated with a view to his accession to the Presidency, though this has occurred on five occasions; and in each instance there has either, as with Andrew Johnson and Roosevelt, been a complete reversal of his predecessor's pol-

icy, or, as with Chester Arthur, an attitude of complete uncreativeness. The position, indeed, is utterly anomalous; and no experiment, like that of President Harding with Mr. Coolidge, which seeks to keep the Vice-President in touch with policy has had any value. It is bad enough to have Presidents nominated systematically by interested wire-pullers; but it is surely worse to have Vice-Presidents chosen by wire-pullers who are not even interested. Nothing in the working of the Constitution shows more lamentably the little respect of the system for the quality of men.

That is, indeed, throughout its capital defect. Granted the premise of the separation of powers, its formal aspects are logical enough. They are, indeed, politically dubious in the light of historic experience; but, more, they are politically vicious when they operate in the psychological penumbra of Jacksonian democracy. For the essential quality of the system is that it necessarily fails to elevate the temper of public life. The Presidency, of course, is an office as great as any in the gift of a democracy; but the terms of its conferment are, save by accident, fatal to its being occupied by the man who is fit to exercise its powers. To be a member of Congress, even to be a senator, will not

often attract the highest talents in the Republic, for the simple reason that the separation of powers insulates the senator or representative from reasonable hope of any large and concrete achievement. The best members of the House of Commons go there because it is the highroad to the Cabinet, and a seat therein means that they put their hands upon a big machine of which the capacity for influence is enormous. The American legislator lacks almost entirely that prospect; and the American administrator is, on his side, similarly hampered by the knowledge that the machine he is to drive must run along a road largely indicated by others. There is not enough in such an outlook to attract from men of first quality their whole energy of mind throughout their lives. And it is, indeed, noteworthy that since the Civil War, at least, politics has rarely been the permanent vocation of the outstanding figures of American life. As with President Wilson, it has been the end of one career; or, as with Mr. Root and Mr. Hughes, it has been an interlude in another. There is, doubtless, the exceptional instance of Mr. Roosevelt; but it is the general rule that the career of politician as a life-adventure is in America ample enough only to attract the men of routine mediocrity.

And the influence of this, in its turn, upon American social life is notable. The real leadership of America is rarely found in political circles. The influence of politics upon the national consciousness, the part played by them in the mind of the average man, is curiously, even pitifully, small. An American is less instinct with the sense of the state than the citizen of any first-class European power. He feels less related to, less responsible for, his government. He is cynical about its activities and its personnel in a way to which only long residence in America can habituate a citizen of Europe. It affects notably the political speculation of America; there has not been since the Civil War one political philosopher of first-rate eminence in America. Yet in economics, in metaphysics, in the natural sciences, in jurisprudence, America has been on an equal level with the best of European achievement. It affects also the press. American newspapers give a volume of information to which, perhaps, that of only two European journals can compare. But the comment on that information is, as a general rule, notably inferior to the comment of the European press. For the latter writes always with the knowledge that the effect it produces on public opinion may well unmake

a government. The power to produce action of a decisive kind is the great motive-force of the finest journalism. The American journalist has no such power even when the opportunity of a Presidential election is counted in its full force. Articles which leave men where they were are not likely to be scrutinized with care; and they are, therefore, not likely to be written with care. There exists always a sense of remoteness between the act and the written word which is fatal to the influence the latter might exercise.

It is worth while, perhaps, to illustrate the small part played in American life by the sense of the political adventure by a concrete example. One of the acid tests of a political system is its ability to gain the interest of youth simply because, as a career, it demands a lifetime of service. The observer who visits the universities of Europe will find in them a significant body of students already devoted to a political career. They will find there an active party-life, with its journals, its meetings, its debates. The politicians themselves naturally look to the universities as an essential recruiting ground for their future colleagues. Yet, save in the presidential year, there is no such vivid political life in an American college. The habit of political debate

is hardly existent. The eager disputation, the desire to take an active part in the conflict in the field, the desire consciously to adopt a political career, these are unknown. One cannot meet a body of English trade unionists without finding men to whom a political career is an object of ambition; one would have to search far among the labor-unionists of America to discover one who consciously desired to be a member of Congress. Yet, as Disraeli said, the youth of a nation are the trustees of posterity. The future of any system, the quality it will have, depends, in large degree, upon the interest it can awaken in their minds.

It is, of course, true that the power of politics in America to influence or to alter the national life is less than elsewhere. It is true, also, that leadership, in the European political sense, has been notable in industry and law in a significant way; certainly, on the Bench men like Justice Holmes have given an impetus to creative action such as a great statesman in Europe contributes to political effort. Yet none of this gives to the national life that purposive integration it is the business of politics to supply. We have to plan a modern civilization in terms which necessitate collective habits of thought; we need then the insti-

tutions to give the fullest expression to those habits. It is the business of government today to preserve for all citizens the minimum basis of life deemed adequate for men who would realize in conscious coöperation the eminent worth of their humanity. Presidential institutions in America were created when government had a very different end in view. Their retention now serves rather to thwart than to secure the great ideas of which America was in its origins the sponsor.

THE RECOVERY OF CITIZENSHIP

If democratic government is to survive, it must discover means of restoring to the individual citizen his personal initiative and responsibility. For it is difficult not to feel that the scale of modern civilization has of itself done much to deprive him of his freedom. He cannot hope, in populations of the modern size, that his own voice will be clearly heard. To want effectively, he must be part of an organization wide enough, and significant enough, to be able to make its impress upon political authority. The citizen who stands alone today is lost. It is as part of a group that he secures the power to fulfill himself.

The classical theory of political democracy has largely proceeded upon quite different lines. It has assumed that as long as the individual citizen has a formally equal share in electing those by whom he is to be governed, his intelligence on the one hand, and the sanction of reëlection on the other, will build a state responsive to the wants of the average man. Such assumptions have not been ful-

filled in the event. The average man does not seem to feel that politics are his concern. He prefers to be acted for, rather than to act himself. He does not, either coherently or effectively, feel himself to be part of the actual process of government. He thinks of his rulers as persons apart from his normal life, dealing with matters he can hardly hope to control. He has a sense that the more ample the size and functions of the modern state, the less opportunity he will have to take any important part in the disposal of its business. The number of those who can occupy office, whether central or local, is necessarily fractional; and political significance comes to most, as Rousseau saw, as a brief and pitiful moment at election-time.

Nor can it be said, as classical theory also assumed, that the parliamentary process is an education for the multitude. It was thought that they would read the debates and assert their opinions; and it was elaborately explained that the legislative assembly is a mechanism so nicely constructed as to respond with delicate accuracy to the expression of the popular view. But, in sober fact, the major part of legislative discussion now centers round problems of a quasi-technical character, the appreciation of which depends upon a sustained

and informed intellectual effort which no multitude has either the energy or the knowledge to attempt. And so wide are the regions over which legislative discussion must necessarily travel that the average student of affairs will be hard put to it if he depends upon the proceedings of a legislature for his grasp of the situation. Few, indeed, are the big subjects with which a legislature can adequately cope; many are the themes, some of them of first-rate import, with which it does not concern itself at all. The first business, moreover, of a legislature is to decide; and its procedure is so conceived as to compel it to decision. Our politics, as Lord Balfour has said, are an organized quarrel, in which the necessary pressure of party limits the intensity of illumination which may hope to emerge. It is only the specialist who is not baffled by the bewildering variety of issues which confront him; and even he is not seldom at a loss from sheer ignorance of the wants of that constituency it is, presumably, his business to satisfy.

II

We are told, of course, and especially by the politicians, that we are governed by public opin-

ion; and we are bidden to consider the way in which a legislative assembly reflects the will of the democracy in being. But the trouble about public opinion is our constant uncertainty as to when it is public and when it is opinion. Any one, for instance, who wanted to know the nature of English public opinion upon Egypt, or the control of the electricity supply, or of American public opinion on Nicaragua or Teapot Dome, would be hard put to it to find a response for which any precise measure of accuracy could be affirmed. The statistics of presidential elections in America suggest, if they suggest anything, a declining public interest in that great struggle for power; and it is notable that, in a recent British by-election, where the deep interest of the voters in the contest was widely commented upon, less than sixty per cent of them went to the poll. In local matters, the situation is even worse; if a third of the electorate registers its vote, the result is considered a triumphant vindication of the representative system. Nor is the position different upon the European continent. The outstanding feature of post-war politics has been apathy tempered by resort to dictatorship; and the essential problems, mainly of an economic character, have been incapable of resolution by the ordinary political mechanisms.

The view, moreover, that the legislative assembly represents the popular will is, at the best, dubious. For the party system limits rigorously the number of wills that can hope to be effective; and the average private member is the creature of the leaders who dominate the caucus of his party. The machinery by which members are chosen narrows both the power to be elected, and the opportunity to choose; and the experience of western Europe seems to suggest that any system of proportional representation that secured an assembly actually mirroring the opinion of the public would destroy the efficiency not only of the assembly itself, but also of the executive power. The facts that an assembly may be elected on one issue, and then deal with matters for which no mandate from the people is discoverable, that it may be the creature of a passing burst of electoral temper, that there is no coherent way of relating its action to popular desire in the intervals between elections—these facts necessarily introduce grave elements of fiction into the claims that are made on its behalf.

III

Our political systems, as the nineteenth century conceived them, are, in fact, built upon two as-

sumptions neither of which is adequately founded. The first is a view of human nature as both simple and primarily intellectual in character. It is, on the contrary, extraordinarily complex; and intellect is only one, and not the most powerful, of the varied elements in its being. The second is the belief that the average man is a political animal who, because he is rationally aware of his own self-interest, can be trusted both to provide himself with the necessary materials for judging the government under which he lives, and to act upon the implications those materials convey. These assumptions have had to work in an environment of constantly increasing scale. Scientific discovery has built a unified world out of a congeries of petty towns and disconnected villages; and the citizen of today is forced into an international outlook without any experience of what a world-civilization means. These assumptions, further, have had to work in states which have been forced by the logic of their institutional systems into a centralization forever increasing; even in federal America it is the shadow, of state-sovereignty, and not the substance, that survives. These factors, and others like them, have meant the increasing separation of the individual citizen from the source of de-

cision. So much has to be done, so remote is the ambit of decision from his daily contacts, that he becomes, increasingly, the mere recipient of orders he has to obey—orders in the issuing of which no search has been made for his consent, no demand for his scrutiny. That opportunity to contribute his instructed judgment to the public good which is, as the Greeks saw, the essence of citizenship, is no longer within his power. Our scale of life, and our method of responding to its wants, have made him a private person to whom politics is a matter of episodic and tangential interest. We use neither his knowledge of his wants, nor his capacity to express the meaning he has found in his experience of life.

The error, indeed, is not merely institutional, though its main roots are there. The failure to find suitable units of governmental reference is a capital one, simply because the necessary consequence of what we have is a deficiency in civic interest and knowledge. It takes high drama, a war, a financial scandal, the defeat of a minister, to make the man in the street aware of his governors. Yet the theory is that the action of those governors is kept adequate and honorable by his persistent scrutiny. Kindred errors are: the educational sin which, for most, cuts short the process of training in the art

of thought exactly at the point where knowledge begins to exert its fascination, and the grim facts of an economic system which makes demands upon the vast majority too intense to leave them with energy or leisure for intellectual effort. Machine-technology fashions its subjects in its own image; and they have become tools in human shape whom an imaginative reconstruction of our institutions might have made free men.

IV

There is a good deal of ruin in a nation, said Adam Smith; and certainly, the capacity for self-regeneration in human nature is one of the most hopeful aspects of social life. Alongside political institutions but partially adapted to the needs of our time, men have built innumerable voluntary institutions to express deeply-felt needs which have escaped the categories of political expression. They represent, in their formidable complexity, a spontaneity and a will to self-realization of which it is difficult to exaggerate the significance. They lack, for the most part, the compulsory formalism of legal institutions. They depend, much more surely than the political state, upon their power to satisfy

the wants of their members. They respond, simply because they are voluntary in origin, much more quickly and fully to the experience they embody. They display in their internal life a remarkable intensity of effort. A trade union, a local chamber of commerce, a professional association, a neighborhood guild, around these can be built for their members a life that appears far more full than the life offered to them as mere members of the state. Around them is built a system of allegiances, which, as the history of churches and trade-unions makes evident, no state can afford to neglect. Our problem is their proper exploitation for a communal end; and that can only be achieved as the influences, amazing in their creative diversity, are integrated with the political system. For as we use the experience they embody, we bring into contact with the state the fused wants of innumerable citizens whose wills can hardly hope, in any other articulate and coherent form, to reach the central focus of power. As we use them, we become aware of meaning in individual lives which otherwise escapes the notice of those who seek to probe the unexpressed wills of individual citizens in their purely political relations. To become aware of that meaning is to become more capable of entering

the inner hearts of men than the classic theory makes possible.

We need not deny that the diversity, often enough, means antagonism. There is no necessary unity in society; there is no plane upon which, in some mysterious alchemy, the will, say of the Governor of the Bank of England, becomes one with the will of the Third International. What there is of unity in society is of our deliberate making, and any careful scrutiny of its character will show that, at best, it is fragmentary and incomplete. The function of coördinating these diversities into a unity sufficient for law and order we intrust, for the most part, to the state. But we too rarely inquire into the purposes of coördination, and, still more rarely, into the methods by which it can be most successfully achieved. The state, as a general rule, translates into law merely those wills that are strong enough to make effective their power of self-expression, and its legal process converts automatically power into right. Yet, obviously, it is essential to inquire whether those wills deserve, on the facts, the expression they receive. For the whole implied purpose of a democratic system is its assumption that each individual citizen is, equally with any other, entitled to find the avenues of sat-

isfaction fully open to him. He has demands to make upon life. The business of the state is to make possible for him the realization of those demands. As he makes them, he has an experience of the problems to be faced, the difficulties to be overcome, of unique value to the ultimate task of successful coördination. It is only as the state can catch the meaning of what the individual citizen has known and intimately felt, only as it finds his experience made articulate, that it can know the purpose it must make real in its proper proportions.

V

Any geographical system of political structure is inadequate to embody the lives it seeks to express. For no small part of the lives of men escapes altogether the geographical classifications upon which the state mainly relies for the purpose of finding their wants. A citizen of London or New York has, quite unquestionably, vital interests in common with other citizens of London or New York. He needs, as they need, proper drainage, a satisfactory supply of water and electricity, a smooth and continuous system of transport, good schools for his children within reasonable distance of his

home. But he has interests, too, which cannot be expressed in terms of geographical neighborhood. He may be a teacher, concerned with other members of his profession, to maintain in his occupation certain standards of technique and reward. He may be a business man to whom, with others of his particular branch of commerce, the preservation of free trade is of paramount importance. He may be a protagonist of the doctrine that the well-being of peoples depends upon the reduction of armaments, or an ardent communist to whom Moscow is his spiritual home; in either case his main allegiance may belong to an international organization which decisively rejects the finality of state decisions.

It is obvious that the interests represented by these spiritual relationships are independent altogether of geographical conditions; and it is important that they should be brought into direct contact with the formal activity of the state. At present, the groups representing these specific interests have little opportunity for making known their wants. They are dependent, in the largest degree, upon their power to impress political parties; and these, in their turn, are partly a generalized expression of certain habits of economic

power, and, partly (above all in their non-economic aspects) the brokers of ideas which they believe will be acceptable to the unknown multitude. In the process of time, the element of chance determines the fortune of a party to a degree that is baffling in its complexity. The history of modern England might have been notably different if Mr. Joseph Chamberlain had remained in the Liberal party; and no one can read the history of his separation from it without the sense that, at least in its origins, the differences of outlook were born of temperamental rather than of intellectual antagonisms. No one, either, can measure how much loss the world has suffered by President Wilson's decision to make the acceptance by America of the League of Nations a matter of party triumph instead of national consent.

Our business is, as best we may, to make the experiences of men, and the demands they build out of those experiences, available directly, instead of indirectly, to the state as coördinator. They cannot themselves be allowed to dominate the process of government. But they can be given such an integral relationship with that process as to make it far more certain than now that the felt wants of men have been properly weighed in the making

of decisions which affect them. From one angle of vision, this means an effort at the decentralization of the modern state, a return to wider local responsibilities and powers, and the discovery of suitable areas upon which to confer them. For no one can look at the present over-burdened legislature in England or France or America without seeing, as Lamennais said, that centralization results in apoplexy at the center, and anemia at the extremities.

That is, however, only one aspect of a new political orientation. We need the decentralized state; but we need also the functional state. The society we encounter in daily life is inherently federal in character. There are not only spatial units, like London and Yorkshire, New York and Kansas; there are also what may be termed interest-units, like the Methodist Church, the legal profession, the cotton industry. Every problem of government presented by units of space is presented also by units of interest. Even their interconnections are not dissimilar in character; and they present, also, a wider international aspect, which in all probability, has immense significance for the future. These interest-units consolidate their lives, and build about themselves a system of control which

no student of government can afford to neglect. In some degree, indeed, we recognize the reality of the common life they have created. We accord to professions like the bar and medicine, for instance, a power of self-direction which becomes the more remarkable, the more carefully it is scrutinized. And within its limits, each of these interest-units will be found to display all the characteristic appearances of a state. It decides upon the terms of admission to its ranks. It has the analogue of a penal code in its professional standard of conduct. It elects a governing body which seeks to maintain the welfare of its constituency against the competing welfares of other bodies; just as the government of a state seeks to preserve the strength of its own community amid the competition of other states. It is, moreover, important to note the effect of this corporate life upon those who participate in it. No one who knows the internal life of a great trade-union, the Miners' Federation in Great Britain, or the United Garment Workers in the United States, can doubt that the impress of this corporate activity builds for many the channels through which their desires can be made most effective, the fulfillment of their personalities most complete. To utilize them as a

source of knowledge and responsibility is one of the most urgent tasks of our time.

VI

The general outlook that is here emphasized results in a twofold demand. On the one hand, it demands new and supplementary institutions within the pattern, both central and local, of the state as we now know it; on the other, it urges that we need to devolve a much wider range of definite governmental responsibility upon the interest-units that exist on every side. In the realm of traditional institutions that means two things. It means, first of all, reversing the historic process of giving to local territorial units only those powers which the central legislature is willing to confide to them, and insisting, instead, that they are entitled to experiment in any direction not definitely forbidden by statute. The value of local initiative of this kind cannot easily be exaggerated. Not only does it provide a pattern for others to imitate and to improve; but it also provokes the coöperation of men not hitherto awake to the significance of government. No one who is aware of the triumphs of municipal enterprise in Germany will doubt the

value of local decentralization of this kind. It not only encourages local responsibility, but it also minimizes the cost of that responsibility to the community as a whole. It not only lessens the pressure of local affairs upon the central legislature of the state; it also provides a means, not otherwise available, of stimulating local pride in civic achievement, and, inferentially, of associating local effort with the task of government in a much more creative way than is now possible. For many to whom gas and water politics are permanently unattractive will be drawn into an interest in local functions once the area over which these extend is dependent largely upon the local will. When it is possible, for example, to make provision for dramatic enterprise a natural branch of local government activity, it will be found that there exists in each area a largely untapped source of public energy waiting to be used; and the energy which begins by confining itself to the drama will quickly find that the proper use of a local theater inevitably communicates energy to the schools, and thence, as inevitably, to the homes of the people.

Such a change, indeed, is not in any sense a large one; it is in the realm of supplementary institutions that novelty is most called for. And here

wisdom begins by the recognition of the value in government of advisory bodies. The possibilities they embody are not now a mere matter of faith. Sir Arthur Salter is probably the most distinguished European official of the post-war period. "Advisory Committees," he writes, "are an invaluable instrument for breaking administrative measures on the back of the public. Modern government often involves action affecting the interests, and requiring the good-will, either of large sections of the community, or of the community as a whole. . . . In such cases, the prior explanation and the assent of committees of representative men who, if convinced, will carry the assent of the several sections of the community, will be of the greatest possible value." Lord Haldane was admittedly the greatest British administrator of the last fifty years. "We think," he wrote of advisory committees, "that the more they are regarded as an integral part of the normal organization of a department, the more will Ministers be able to command the confidence of Parliament and the public in their administration of services which seem likely, in an increasing degree, to affect the lives of large sections of the community."

Such advisory committees ought to have an in-

tegral place in both central and local government. How ought they to be composed, and what should they do? First of all, their members should be representative of interests affected, and not merely nominated by Ministers or officials. An advisory committee on education should, at least as to the majority of its members, be nominated by association of teachers, of superintendents of education, of parents. These can speak with an authority to which no personal nominees can ever pretend. When they suggest, or criticize, or investigate, there is behind them an already organized and alert opinion which assures attention for what they have to say. It is important, secondly, to split up these bodies into their proper categories. An advisory body on education, for instance, would be, for the most part, worthless, if given jurisdiction over the whole educational field. What is needed is a system of committees on primary education, secondary education, the work of the university, technical instruction, and so forth. Anything a government, whether local or central, proposed to do in each of these fields would then be submitted to an examination from those most competent to judge. And we should have, by this means, a much-needed check upon both the never-ending audacity

of the elected person, and the otherwise inevitable tendency of the official to bureaucracy. We should give to these interest-units a power of direct impact upon the work of government which they do not possess in any coherent way. We should rectify the inadequacy of purely territorial representation by putting an element of functional representation at exactly that focal point where decisions are made. We should assure thereby the certainty that whatever representative opinion existed upon the policy of government would be properly weighed. And the knowledge that it was to receive such consideration would, I believe, awaken an intensity of interest in the process of politics, which has now no channels of this kind through which to work.

VII

What, then, would such committees do? Their function, I think, should be not unlike that which Bagehot attributed to the English Crown: they should advise, encourage, and warn. The government should be bound to submit to them for counsel and suggestion all legislative proposals upon which it intended to embark. They should have the right, further, to make suggestions for activi-

ties, and, where they thought fit, to embark upon investigations in realms where, as they believed, either inquiry or new knowledge was advisable. Wherever problems arose which interest more than one committee it would be a simple matter to submit it to both, and if necessary to have a joint meeting of them for its consideration. When a measure came before a municipal council or a legislative assembly, we should then have the assurance that it had been discussed and dissected by those who were to be affected by its results. We should know that it had not been brought forward without being subject to the criticism of representative opinion upon its probable consequence. We should end a good deal of ignorant legislation; and we should make at least supremely difficult a good deal of corrupt legislation. A bad electricity bill would be assured of basic attack from the organized voice of engineering opinion; and this, in its turn, would stimulate alert opinion outside the ranks of the technicians. The method, in short, enables us to create support for a good bill and attack upon a bad one. It prevents the process of government from being secretive and haphazard and ill-informed. It brings to bear upon its habits the pressure of informed opinion; and thereby it

awakens to knowledge and interest, uninformed opinion outside.

Every reason, moreover, for the creation of these advisory bodies at London or Washington or Paris, is a reason for their existence in Manchester or Albany or Bordeaux. There is just as much cause for the local analysis, by informed opinion, of a health program in St. Louis, as for central analysis of tariff policy at Washington. Anyone who thinks for a moment of the valuable suggestions a local committee on railway service or electricity or the telephone service, has to supply, will see the possibilities they offer. Here, at least, is a real way of preventing the atmosphere of administration from degenerating into the issue of orders, on the one hand, and their indifferent acceptance on the other. It provides means for utilizing the services of men who now avoid public life, either because they are unwilling to undergo the process of election, or because their interest is not in the general complex of governmental functions, but in a single aspect of that complex. The system popularizes the administrative process by widening the area of persons who are competent to scrutinize it. It provides for a constant interchange of opinion between the center and the circumference of gov-

ernment. Because the system is advisory and not executive in character, it leaves simple and intelligible the ultimate institutions, and it does not make authority degenerate into anarchy by the indefinite division of power. It prevents it from becoming autocratic by subjecting it, at each stage, to the pressure of an opinion usually specially competent, and always specially interested; and it assures a hearing for that opinion. It brings the organized interests of men, their churches, their trade-unions, their chambers of commerce, into a definite relation with the central and local governments. It makes it possible for those activities to bear the impress of external opinion by subjecting them to a constant stream of criticism and inquiry. It multiplies, in a word, the sources through which the citizen's personality may be made significant. That, after all, is the purpose of democracy.

VIII

But the thesis which underlies this notion offers, in its second aspect, even wider, if remoter, possibilities. I have argued that interest-units present problems of government as real as those of territorial units. And exactly as decentralization in the

territorial sphere is by all odds the best method for the evocation of responsibility, so also, I suggest, the conferring of definite governmental responsibility upon interest-units would have a similarly desirable result. To some extent, we have already recognized that fact. We perceive definite advantages in conferring wide powers of self-government upon the professions; and even when the largest area of failure is taken into account, the standards of medicine, the law, engineering, remain notably high. Our problem is the transformation, as Justice Brandeis has put it, of business into a profession. We need to give it the same organized and coherent relation to government in order to elicit a morale of equal quality. To do so, we need to form in each industry associations both of manufacturers and of workers by hand and by brain so as to secure within its confines an industrial council upon which powers may be devolved. Such a council would normally be representative of four interests. There is the interest of owners; there is the interest of the non-owning producer; there is the interest of direct users of the product of the industry; there is the interest, finally, of government as the body concerned with the protection of the public as a whole. If each of the

parties were equally represented on the council; if membership of the associations representing ownership and the vocations were compulsory—the council might well within the ambit of national or state legislation, issue orders binding upon the industry as a whole. I see no reason, further, why each council should not possess a judicial department with the right to inflict penalties for the evasion of its orders, and to see that national legislation upon such matters as hours of labor, or factory conditions, are properly observed. There might well be, further, a division of arbitration and conciliation to minimize, within the trade, the sphere of industrial conflict. It is, in short, desirable to attempt, as in the professions, to make responsibility for what may be called the morale of industry a matter which explicitly, and as a matter of government, concerns those who are engaged in its operation.

I can, of course, only set out here in general terms the functions of such a council, for the different conditions of particular industries would involve variety both of function and of structure. But two things may be said. I am here deliberately proposing the transference of governmental institutions to industry in order to evoke in it a sense

of industrial citizenship; I am desirous that a man should feel that, as a coal-operator or a miner, he is as really a citizen of a great city, as he is in his capacity as an American or a resident of Pittsburgh. And it is, secondly, important to realize that, within the sphere of function, it is just as possible to decentralize authority as it is in the geographical sphere. Exactly as there is a government for America and a government for Illinois, so there could be a government for the coal industry of America and one for the coal industry of Illinois. If we can teach a man that the responsibilities of his position as producer create exactly the responsibilities, give birth to exactly the same opportunities of statesmanship, as the process of what is normally called politics, we shall, as I believe, do much to awaken in him energies and experiences the import of which he is now only partly aware of. And it is in that awakening that there lies our main hope of revivifying the life of the modern political state.

IX

What, then, might be the jurisdiction of these councils? They would discuss, and issue orders

upon, (1) the wages, working conditions, and hours of labor in the industry; (2) the stabilization of employment and production; (3) the settlement of industrial disputes; (4) the collection of information upon all matters pertaining to the industry, for example, statistics of cost and output, methods of manufacture and salesmanship; (5) facilities for the consideration of inventions in machinery and methods, with the provision of safeguards for their divisers; (6) investigation of special problems in the industry, with particular reference to foreign experience; (7) research into the health conditions of the industry, with special reference to the use of noxious materials; (8) supervision of apprenticeship in the industry; (9) organization of technical education; (10) the provision of necessary publicity, especially abroad. And besides this, such councils would serve as a link between the industry and the political state, and also coöperate, where necessary, with the councils of other industries on matters of joint interest.

If we conceive of interest-units in such a fashion, it is obvious that from their representative institutions we can build a definite vehicle of expression for men whose experience of life is, in these fields,

either not known at all, or, at best, only known in a very fragmentary way. We can build within them, also, definite avenues of statesmanship. A man in the mining industry with something to say can address an audience fitted by its expert knowledge or experience for response to his ideas. He will not, as now, have to seek the ear of men untrained in his particular experience, and distracted by a hundred competing problems about each of which they can necessarily know little. And by such multiplication of the centers of authority, we go far toward the democratization of the state. Our civilization is, for the most part, built upon the assumption that power belongs to a few, and our institutions have been constructed to make those few retain their power. Largely, they are not democratic institutions, because they do not attempt to take account of the mass of experience affected by their working. They have disregarded the wants, and, therefore, the rights, of the common man. He has repaid their neglect by an indifference which involves their general inadequacy; and there has always come a time when that inadequacy, as it is prolonged, issues in a catastrophic consequence.

X

The old politics was built upon a principle of hierarchy; the few ruling over the many with a technique of consultation which at best was interstitial and haphazard, and, at the worst, a pretense in which no one believed. The new politics seeks a creative coördination in which the state is less a sovereign power standing over against its members, than a community of communities integrating their experiences in terms of the widest possible examination of these experiences. Its law, that is to say, will be less the command of an authority which imposes itself by its sanctions, and more the expression of relations found adequate in the lives of men. To the end that those relations will be rightly interpreted, it will create institutions for the systematic organization of experience, and its not less systematic interpretations. It will build its conclusions upon an induction to which each interest in the community has contributed its proper share. It will recognize that if it is natural for Manchester to determine its water-supply it is natural, also, for the cotton industry

to determine the terms upon which its apprentices are trained to their vocation.

The coördinating authority may still be chosen by persons who are not differentiated as they choose by the professions to which they belong. That absence of differentiation is, I think, essential because it is simple, and it involves a final power in government conceived upon a territorial basis. But the groups we encounter in social and industrial life need to be federally related to the government if the decisions of the latter are to be wise. That means, as I have urged, giving to those groups the means of prior and organic influence with government before it pronounces upon the problems of coördination. It means weighing their opinions, seeking their criticisms, meeting their special needs. It means, further, allowing them responsibility in their own life, by the deliberate conference of power over their own affairs. It means, for example, that the Industrial Council of the mining industry could force upon its constituents a pension scheme for aged or crippled miners. It involves, broadly speaking, less direct administration by the state, and a more flexible application of its statutes in terms of the varying situations to which they ap-

ply. It conceives, accordingly, of state-made laws essentially as minimum solutions; it leaves to the interests they affect the power and the obligation to implement them. The result, doubtless, will be a more intricate world; but its structure will multiply the chance of creativeness.

XI

The political organization that we know is, for the most part, the response to needs and problems which are now largely obsolete. We confront a new epoch, and we require an institutional scheme more fitted to meet the issues that it raises. In the past, it cannot be said that a recognition of the dignity of human nature was an implied function of the state; in the present, no state can long deny that the degree of its recognition is the measure of its power. No state, accordingly, can hope, in the long run, for survival save as it knows the minds and hearts of its citizens; for upon no other condition can it, in the end, retain their allegiance.

To win that knowledge, it must utilize their experience. It must regard itself as a system of coöperating interests in which, and through which, the individual finds his scheme of values.

The state of our time must make its authority valid not by the sanctions it can inforce, but by the sense it creates in each of us that its activities are a genuine response to our experience. But to create that sense, it must penetrate within our lives. It must relate to itself the fellowships we have built as avenues for the expression of personal values. As it experiments with them it will come more fully to understand the wants of human nature; and from increasing knowledge, will come increasing power of fulfillment. In no other spirit can it meet the challenge of a new time.

TEACHER AND STUDENT

The business of a university is not the transformation of undergraduates into fountains of information. It does not seek to make men expert in their life's career. Its business is the very different task of teaching the student how facts are converted into truth. Whether it uses history or chemistry or engineering to this end matters nothing so long as the task is accomplished. What it is seeking is the method whereby experience in any branch of knowledge can be connected with the structure of the universe. The pathway to that end is, above all, a training in the habit of skepticism. The student cannot know until he has learned to doubt. He must drive his way to the truths he achieves amid an intellectual tradition which is built upon indifference to any particular convictions and interest in the principle by which convictions can be justifiably held. He must learn that it is not necessarily right to be theist or agnostic, radical or conservative. A university has nothing to do with the dogmas comprised within these

philosophies. It does not care which of them is right. It is uninterested in their future or their consequences. It seeks only to confer habits of mind which enable the student to weigh the significance of facts from the angle of philosophy. A mind receptive to novelty, capable of wisdom, inclined to moderation—these are the excellencies at which it aims. If the student enters upon his life-work with qualities of this kind, the university will not have lived for him in vain.

There is an immediate value in a university atmosphere from the mere fact that it seeks, as the law of its being, to encompass the whole range of knowledge. For every subject bears upon another. Their juxtaposition corrects and balances what might otherwise possess false perspective. There is immediate discovery that the law must not be divorced from economics, that theology is without meaning save in the context of history. The student learns that knowledge is, after all, a seamless web, and that our categories are, at bottom, merely ways of arranging conveniently the facts we have acquired. Exploration in such an atmosphere tends to correct the limited horizon which, almost always, is the course of the specialist and the practical man. For the eternal vice of the first

is the contracted mind which comes from failing to think beyond the confines of his subject; he has learning without wisdom. So, too, the practical man is, as a rule, ignorantly proceeding upon unconscious assumptions the validity of which he has never tested; he has habit without philosophy. Most of the disasters in the world derive either from the specialist or from the practical man.

But the student cannot be left to play at large in the field of knowledge, for the simple reason that it is too vast for him to encompass. Nor can it be said that there is any special body of knowledge it is his urgent business to acquire. His task is to learn the art of thought; and the university must so organize his instruction as to offer assurance that, when he leaves it, we have the right to hope it has been acquired. We have, therefore, to avoid in the technique we construct, whatever may narrow by undue specialization, as well as whatever may leave the impress of intellectual habits into the validity of which the student has not been taught to examine. We have to avoid, that is to say, the danger of making him either an unphilosophical expert or a practical man.

It is a gigantic task; and fifteen years of university teaching have only made me the more

conscious of its difficulties. The profession of teaching, not least in the university, seems to me the practice of an art as difficult and as complex as any in life. For one is seeking a common measure among minds of which the essence is uniqueness and individuality. One is teaching the art of generalization to students only partly aware of its limitations and its dangers. One is impressing upon the eager cravings of youth for certitude the infinite possibilities of error. One learns that there can be no training of the intellect which is not also a training of the character; and there comes, early enough, a pitiful sense of one's ignorance of the character one has to train. The vast procession of students passes, half-known or dimly known; the teacher has but a partial lien on their time and attention. The contacts he can hope to have with any of them are curiously tangential and fragmentary. Ideas, aspirations, convictions, prejudices are formed in each, of which he is unaware. There is never time for him to explore them in all, and rarely time to explore them in any. He cannot, like the tutor in Rousseau's *Emile* devote himself to a single mind to the exclusion of all others. He can never adequately know the doubts he has created, the dissatisfactions and cer-

tainties he has called into life. The greatest university teachers, William James, T. H. Green, Frederick Turner, Morris Cohen, would, I am convinced, ask no more at the end, than to have it said that they have failed splendidly. How, at the least, can we do what we can to make sure of splendid failure?

II

I shall divide here what I have to say into three parts. I shall discuss, first of all, the material of instruction to be offered. Then I shall seek to show how that material is to be utilized for the purpose of instruction. Finally, I shall seek to analyze the type of teacher the business of a university requires. In all I have to say, I shall be dealing only with humanistic subjects, for the simple and sufficient reason that I have had no experience in teaching other branches; but I add that discussion with colleagues leaves me with the impression that the principles I shall lay down are not without their application in the scientific field.

I turn then, first to the material to be used. Here, as I think, it is essential that the field of study should be wide enough to display the bound-

aries of the subject, and narrow enough to permit of some degree of profundity in a portion of the field. We are not merely training the memory; of first importance is the fact that we are training the mind. If the student does history, let him do economics and politics as well; if he does literature, let him do history and philology; if he does philosophy, let him combine therewith a knowledge of scientific method and an insight into the principles of at least one major science. Nothing is worse than the habit (still common in too many universities) of allowing the student to roam at large over the whole of knowledge. There have been universities where courses in chemistry and Indic philology, American history and the Appreciation of Art, have all counted equally in the achievement of a degree. There are universities where the student, within some allotted field, roams over the vast surface of a complex subject and, at the end, knows nothing beyond the names of obvious peaks he could hardly avoid. He emerges as a mere taster of information, no different in mental make-up than the enthusiastic member of a woman's club who learns in ten lectures all she deems it necessary to know of litera-

ture or art or politics. This, in a university, is the sin against the light.

It is, moreover, fundamental that, in any subject, the student should learn its essentials at first hand. If he is studying Shakespeare, he must read Shakespeare; it is not enough to know what Bradley or Kittredge has learned from reading him. If he is studying the history of political ideas, he must wrestle at first hand with Plato and Aristotle, Locke and Hobbes and Rousseau; and if, knowing them, he cannot recite the endless catalogue of names a textbook will recite, he will not, as a rule, be much the worse off. If he is doing economics, it is fundamental to make him read Adam Smith and Ricardo; to wrestle with them will give his mind an infinitely better texture than the ability to reproduce the leaded definitions even of a first-rate professorial manual. For what, in the handling of the material, it is essential for the student to encounter is the great mind which has formed the civilized tradition. He will rarely find it easy to wrestle with; but he will gain infinitely more from surmounting the difficulties of the supreme book than by digesting a second-hand summary of what the supreme book contains. The curse of university instruction is invariably the textbook.

Works of this kind are read by all but the first-rate student; and they deprive all but him of that thing essential to a tough mind, the thing William James called "the pungent sense of effective reality." There is no way to thought, save for the rare genius, except by way of the great thinker; and the textbook, however excellent, which stands in the way of such acquaintance is a snare and a delusion.

Any consideration, moreover, of material must build upon the factor of time. The undergraduate has three or four years in which to study; and there is no time in so brief a period for any but fundamental discipline. That means, I think, the deliberate exclusion from the field of anything intended to confer a technical equipment or to decorate the mind. Instruction in the art of writing plays, a course seeking to make students accountants, training in the appreciation of music or the art of public speaking—these, and things like these, as an essential factor in the discipline the university seeks to convey, are simply so much waste. There is nothing to be said against them in themselves. There is everything to be said against them as necessary parts of a university course. There are the best reasons why a student should

learn to appreciate music or understand the mysteries of a balance-sheet. But those reasons are not integrally connected with the basic purpose at which a university aims. Additions to knowledge resulting from these studies do not constitute illumination of mind. Such subjects do not help that power to reduce facts to order upon principles which carry conviction, which is the essence of university purpose. A student who has attended a course in dramatic technique may become a successful amateur actress, or more rarely, an almost successful Broadway playwright. But the art so acquired will have been gained at the expense of more ultimate things. There is a different time for its acquisition; and the majority of those who seek it as a discipline are usually the students who desire rather to amble delicately through a university career for social reasons, or regard a university degree merely for the cash value it will later represent. They profit by the university only to betray its ideals.

III

The selection of the proper material is only a part of the problem; it is necessary to consider

the methods of teaching. For the most part, our universities rely upon the lecture system with, or without, the addition of classes. The teacher expounds a subject; the student takes notes; some reading is assigned to him dwelling upon the lecturer's theme. He may later be a member of a class in which the lecturer, or some substitute, will ask questions, or deal with difficulties, in the hope of conferring further illumination. He may, also, be asked to write short papers which he will receive back with criticisms.

Of the value of some lectures there can be no sort of doubt. Some men seem born to inspire the student with an enthusiasm for their subject. Others can so analyze a complex body of material that the student learns the art of generalization as the masters alone can generalize, in a fashion which nothing else can replace. Others again can send the student away full of such passionate questioning that he has no alternative but a mental strife within himself until he has found some kind of response. Lectures that do these things are a valuable part of university technique.

But it must, I think, be admitted that such lectures are rare. Most of them are reproductions

of books, an effort at a summary of knowledge so as to save the student's time. Many of them present a corpus of doctrine which the student is bidden to reject only at his peril. It is, I think, fair to assert that the business of a lecture is to do one of three things. It must genuinely convince a student that the theme is of first-rate importance; it must, that is to say, drive him into personal investigation of its substance. Or it must contain genuinely new knowledge or a new point of view not obtainable in the obvious books; it must, in this case, give old facts a new perspective by addition or original emphasis. Or, thirdly, it must raise problems upon old material which forces the student to think out for himself the way and the nature of their solution. Lectures which do not seek to do these things have no place in a genuinely educational process.

And lectures alone are never a satisfactory method of instruction; it is essential that they be supplemented by discussion and the written work of the student. Here, as I believe, we reach the pivot of the problem in American and English university education. Only the exceptional student gains much from a lecture. The average student

needs consistent personal contact with first-rate and mature minds, in both the written and the spoken word, if he is to gain anything permanent from even the best of lectures. That means that the discussion class must be small and the teacher of first-rate quality. It is not good enough to make lecturing the task of the professor, and discussion classes the office of an "assistant" who is usually a graduate student researching for his doctorate. The student will learn more from half an hour's personal talk with men like Cohen or Haskins or Turner than from a dozen of their lectures. To have his mind turned upside down, to be driven back, by continuous questioning, against difficulties he either did not know or sought to avoid—this is the real pith of intellectual discipline. The assistant who can do this work adequately is rare. And even where he can afford to give his whole mind to the task, he does not compensate for lack of personal contact with the men who are seeking by their lectures to train the student in the art of thought. For education means ten times more when it is built upon the foundation of personal friendship between student and professor than when the latter is, as he too often is, a dim and

awesome figure who appears upon a dais twice or thrice in the week for a session.

IV

Even more emphatically is this the case with the written work. In most universities, this takes the form either of brief themes, or of answers to factual questions which are intended to test the students' acquaintance with their lectures and textbooks. I find it difficult to see common sense in either. A two- or three-page essay, returned with a brief, even pungent comment, does not give the student's mind elbow room. What he needs is to be driven into thinking upon a big scale. He must be made to search out in coherent form the answer to a problem of real size. The essay he turns in must be read with him in detail and phrase by phrase. He must learn his faults of style, the gaps in his logic, the inadequacies of the sources he has used. The teacher must play devil's advocate against the position the student urges, insist that he give justification for his every argument, exhaust the armory of the casuist in his examination of the student's case. No one who has taken an essay with pride to a really good Oxford tutor and

returned deflated from the ordeal can have failed to see that the experience was a landmark in his intellectual history. There are tutors at Harvard and Princeton who have done that for their students. Something of the same thing has come to men who have worked for an "honors" degree at Swarthmore. But, in most English and American universities, Oxford and Cambridge (to their eternal honor) apart, there is no reason in the world why the student should ever have this experience. And when he misses it, he misses the best sort of training the university can give.

Of the brief class-paper in which short factual answers are sought—admirably satirized in Owen Wister's *Philosophy Four*—I can only say that they seem to me sheer waste of time. They test nothing but the poorest sort of memory, and that only in a fashion in no way indicative of mental quality. They never really extend the student's mind. They do not compel him to argue with himself, to build hypotheses, to defend a position. They bring great comfort, doubtless, to the administrative mind which seeks to pin each student down on a card-index, as the entomologist fastens his specimen to the piece of cardboard. But they merely harm the student who answers them and

the teacher who marks them. They hurt the first because they substitute recollection for thinking. They treat information as valuable in itself and neglect the problem of its significance. They are bad for the teacher because they provide him with a lazy substitute for the real business of getting to know the student's mind. They persuade him to confidence where he should be uneasy. They tempt him to routine where his function is painful experiment. Above all, they neglect altogether the basic fact that the student has an individuality of his own. They are factory methods of instruction, useful if we seek to turn out mental Robots by the thousand, dangerous if our ambition is the training of thinking minds.

My case, therefore, in this aspect, is threefold. I have no doubt of the high value in the lecture that inspires, or makes for doubt, or shows the student facts in a new setting. I have no use for the lecture that is merely a substitute for books. I have little interest, either, in the lecture that merely seeks to simplify. A university has no business to retain mental swaddling clothes; it is concerned with the pursuit of intellectual maturity. But lectures without discussion, and that at the highest attainable level, seem to me merely bar-

ren. The chief way in which the student learns to think is by testing his mind against the teacher's mind. He has to learn to ask significant questions, to explain to himself significant answers. He has to find the obvious made doubtful, and the unbelievable proved to be true. He has to be led into a mental jungle and driven, by confronting intellectual danger, to find his way to the light. That, I venture to insist, is work for the best minds a university possesses; and to have it done as inferior work is ruinous to all that great lecturing can achieve. Almost of equal urgency is the writing of essays that have to pass the gamut of detailed criticism. To learn the arrangement of facts so that they become significant, to be taught the danger of eloquence, to realize how difficult is the attainment of clarity and how many are the pitfalls which surround that task of sustained persuasion which is logic—all this is of the essence of a liberal education. Again I would argue, that to deal adequately with a student's essay a first-rate teacher is required. It is never mechanical work. It requires the faculties of the teacher at their most alert and most creative. To intrust it to the second-rate or the mentally half-trained, as we are too

often content to do, is to deprive the student of the highroad to the end we have in view.

V

Here, perhaps, I may interpolate two remarks upon related themes. The university has failed when its students are not aroused to passionate discussion among themselves, or when the work they do fails to awaken them to the study of great books. Unless the system is so organized that students cannot but feel that they are constantly on the heels of some eternal truth, there is something wrong with the system. The university period ought, above all things, to be a period of intellectual excitement. The test of this is nothing so much as the habit of the student outside the classroom. A university, therefore, seems to me to require the deliberate organization of an environment which makes student discussion easy. It ought to be prolific of debating societies, history societies, economic societies, and the rest. It needs urgently halls of residence—the colleges of Oxford and Cambridge are the classic example—where men eat together, talk together, think together. Just as a correspondence course can never

be magnified into a true university, so when students scatter at night to a thousand separate homes, much of what makes for the inwardness of a university is lost. That is why I believe that, rightly handled, the experiment of a college within a college upon which Harvard is about to embark, may well mark an epoch in American education.

The second remark is the need to study great books. I mean this in two senses. On the one hand it means dissatisfaction with the textbook. The student who is satisfied with pemmicanized knowledge has gone through the university with his mind closed; he has eaten facts, but not digested them. He has collected information, but not absorbed ideas. For the textbook that genuinely communicates the light and shade of its theme, the textbook that is critical, skeptical, challenging, is rare. That is the experience the student needs, and only the classics will provide it. On the other hand, it means a habit of personal exploration. The student must learn to attack the masters without thinking of them as part of a course. He must find them interesting or important for their own sake and not because a knowledge of them will give marks in an examination.

I have encountered a student in his third year who had not read *Pride and Prejudice*, because his subject was, he explained, history and not literature. I am inclined to believe that there is no more final test of university adequacy than its effectiveness in creating a widespread curiosity in books. Failure to do this is failure to arouse that hunter's instinct for knowledge which, more almost than any other quality, enables the student to find himself. When I find the student who has made great literature his own personal province, I know that I have found the man whom it is invariably a privilege to teach.

VI

At bottom, the quality of a university is always in direct proportion to the quality of its teachers; and we have to begin by the admission that the great teacher is one of the rarest of human beings. He has to fill a subject with his personality. Careful of truth, he must be yet a casuist. Constantly engaged in the discovery of new knowledge, he must yet, as constantly, be able to tread well-worn paths with a sense of vigor and freshness. He must have, above all, a genius for friendship. He must

make the theme he expounds the highroad to a direct and intimate knowledge of those whom he teaches; and that he cannot do without spontaneous affection for them. The university which secures men of this type has occasion only for humble gratitude. Its business is to neglect the possibly dangerous views he may hold, the absence in him of socially graceful manners, eccentricities of dress or behavior or outlook. Its simple function is to keep him at all costs, and to make the effort upon which he is engaged capable of performance with the least call upon his strength. For the true epochs in a university's life are not marked by its buildings, its books, or even the growth of its numbers; they are marked by the great teachers it has possessed. We still talk of the Oxford of T. H. Green, the Cambridge of Maitland and Henry Sidgwick, the Harvard of James and Turner, as we shall talk of the Harvard of McIlwain and Haskins, the Cornell of Becker and Young, the Columbia of Dewey and Beard. The instinct that builds these categories goes right to the heart of the matter.

University teachers, like the members of other professions, are, for the most part, mediocrities striving to be sublime; our business is to maximize

their sublimity. To do so, we have, above all, to beware of three essential dangers. We must give them no financial reward that does not produce a reasonable standard of comfort; anything less means lack of nervous energy, multiplication of hack-work like textbooks and summer schools, and the guaranty of that shabby gentility which is the ruin of intellectual freedom. We must, secondly, have generous categories of qualification and promotion. The emphasis upon degrees as a test of fitness is almost always the substitution of routine for insight; a doctor of philosophy may have learning in minutiæ, but that is no proof of wisdom in essentials. When we have got a young teacher whose powers and enthusiasm are obviously real, the thing to do is to give him the responsibility of a chair in his subject before he is thirty-five. To do otherwise means, as a rule, that antiquity is mistaken for experience, that when he comes to the point of having a big subject under his control, an excessive period of subordination has unfitted him to plan and initiate. The third danger is the exaltation of the administrator in the office. Teaching always suffers when it is deprived of flexibility by service to a routine. Card-indexes, reports, examinations, neatly rounded

curriculums, multiplicity of committees, these are soul-destroying agencies. They satisfy the bustling executive who loves order and neatness and routine. They make him the despot of the teacher by ministering to his lust for power. For the effective teacher, almost always, wants nothing so much as to be left alone; and the university administrator likes nothing so much as the making of endless rules and regulations and schemes which entrap both teacher and student into the service of habit, which irritate and inhibit the emergence of intellectual freedom. Yet it is above all for that emergence that a university exists; and there is no better test of its adequacy than to inquire whether the administration is powerful and obtrusive or merely observant and helpful.

VII

Every teacher, I believe, has three great obligations. He must continually research, he must keep a fresh mind, and he must know his students not as a shapeless mass seen from a dais, but as individuals whom, if he can, he will cultivate as friends. These are grim conditions, physically exacting and intellectually wearing. By continuous

research I do not mean constant publication. The modern tendency to judge men by their volume of published output is, I believe, responsible for not a little of inadequate teaching standard. It is a facile test of promotion naturally welcome to busy administrators; it is not the slightest proof of intellectual inadequacy. A man should be asked to publish only when he feels that what he has to say requires the test of criticism by other scholars because, thereby, it is likely to add significantly to the sum of knowledge. By research I mean in part a devotion to the reëxamination of the ultimate principles of a subject, and also an endeavor to extend their boundaries by solution of the problems to which they give rise. Some of the greatest scholars of the last half-century, Lord Acton, for instance, and F. J. Turner, published comparatively little; but their knowledge was so wide and deep, their power, born of that knowledge, to ask creative questions so fundamental, that they were able to fertilize all other work in their generation by reason of it. In this sense, the teacher's real task is himself to embark upon the investigation of a really big theme, and use the new insight that research conveys to illuminate the whole subject he expounds. And, almost invariably, the earlier he

finds the big theme with which to grapple, the better work as a teacher he is likely to do.

VIII

He must, in the second place, keep a fresh mind. His lectures, his criticism, his discussion must never become a system of formulas that he regurgitates year by year to students whom the academic tradition has already taught what they are to expect. This involves, I think, a number of important decisions. Certainly, in the first place, some such institution as the sabbatical year is imperative. A man who goes on teaching year in and year out, without the opportunity of leisured self-examination, is bound to go stale. His teaching begins to lose vitality; he lacks the power to develop that intellectual second wind of which William James wrote so wisely. The sabbatical year may mean travel, or research, or a happy browsing amid books. Whatever it means, it involves a substantial period in which the teacher does not teach in order to remain an effective teacher. There is no substitute for this experience. I believe, too, that the fresh mind involves consistent exploration by the teacher of the confines

of his subject. He must be at constant pains to avoid the dangers of undue specialism. He must learn to see his universe in perspective as well as under a microscope. There is no single way of attaining this end, for the simple reason that intellectual habits are as various as men. Morris Cohen makes his philosophy more profound by a constant study of the law. Graham Wallas has quickened his insight into political science by experience of practical administration on the London County Council. Leonard Hobhouse has laid the foundations of English sociology by the practice of political journalism and industrial negotiation. Freshness of mind, in a word, is born of the cultivation of diverse disciplines; there may be learned teaching without it, but there will never be wise teaching.

A third condition of the fresh mind is more difficult to state. It is important that the teacher change from time to time not only the subject-matter he expounds, but also the period of time he devotes to it. It is a bad thing for any man to go on lecturing year in and year out, upon the same theme. The texture of his mind thereby becomes inelastic. His approach to what he has to say becomes formulistic, and his categories of

explanation become tyrants to which he is a slave. One of my first colleagues had lectured upon the same subject (a period of English history) for fifteen years; and, year by year, as the session ended, his notes went back to his box in the Safe Deposit Company, so that next year's work would leave him with no problems. The result was the inevitable one that, at least for the purposes of teaching, he had ceased to think upon his subject. His mind was utterly closed to the new view or the new material, simply because the effort of absorption they would have involved was too great. He had ceased to see his theme as a body of principles and problems; it had become a theological creed not open to reëxamination. Something of the same holds, too, about the period of time. Our division of the university year into terms or semesters tempts us, only too often, to spread our treatment of subjects so as to coincide with those periods. Nothing is more urgent in university technique than experiment in this realm. We are handicapped here by the almost universal tradition of compulsory lectures, and the belief that a certain number of credits, taken together, add up to a university degree. These are evil dogmas which betray us at every turn. Oxford and Cam-

bridge have had the wisdom to have no compulsory lectures; Harvard and Swarthmore have taken steps of importance in this direction. We need to go much further. We need to preach insistently to the student that, granted accessible counsel, the responsibility of what lectures he may attend is on his shoulders as a part of the discipline he is to acquire; and we need to free the teacher from the need to think out his lectures in terms of the units convenient for university administration. A teacher who comes back from a long vacation full of ideas about Rousseau will serve his students better by a short course about something that has excited him than by a long course on which he feels he has nothing new to say. We know from his pupils how admirable a vehicle of instruction was Ranke's habit of discoursing at large in the lecture-room upon some new book that had interested him. We need far more of such practice simply because the book that excites the teacher is a natural source of illumination to the student.

IX

The third great obligation in the teacher, I have said, is the need to make his pupils his friends. No

teaching work is really successful which remains on a purely official plane. The teacher who disappears from his lecture-room as soon as the lecture is over; the teacher who will see students only within stated office-hours, as though he were a manufacturer receiving commercial travelers; the teacher who lays it down, as I have heard it too often laid down, that his connection with the university ends as soon as he leaves its buildings—all these are depriving the student of much that makes for the best in university instruction. For upon that official plane the student's mind can never be intimately known. His real thoughts, his profoundest ambitions, are never revealed in casual intercourse of that kind. The teacher who gets the best out of his students makes his home an annex to the university. He is not prepared to divide off his life into compartments, into some of which the student cannot enter. He entertains them, talks with them, gives them the sense that he is eager to proffer counsel. It is, of course, exacting labor; and it may mean a heavy call on his time. But I think that men like Copeland of Harvard, who have devoted their lives to their students, would say that they have been repaid a hundred times by the affection and insight they

have gained through their devotion; and I know that there are innumerable students all over America to whom Harvard will always mean certain Monday nights in "Copey's" room, where two dozen undergraduates on the floor have been led by his genius for friendship into those high regions of the mind where the mystery of education begins to be revealed.

X

I have dealt here only with the problem of the university and the undergraduate; the professional training a university seeks to confer raises issues, both of personnel and technique, of a quite different order. I have been concerned with the elementary conditions which will enable a student to enter a professional school, on the one hand, or his life's career, on the other, with a mind trained to distinguish substance from shadow. Those conditions will not give results that are sudden or startling or immediate; it is not the business of a university to look for such results. They depend, as Newman said of his own university ideal, "on the slow, silent, penetrating, overpowering effects of patience, steadiness, routine,

and perseverance." They depend, too, for their success upon the two assumptions that the teacher is there from a genuine pride in his vocation, and the student not merely because he is anxious for the material advantage of a university degree. I claim for them no more than their ability to promote love of knowledge for its own sake, to secure that relentless curiosity of the mind which insists upon truth because it cannot do otherwise. Yet, after all, that love and that knowledge have been the parents of all that is most precious in the common life of civilization.

THE ACADEMIC MIND

EVERY civilization develops its protective legends. It takes some flattering unction to its soul lest it should reveal too frankly to itself defects that shame the mind. An India ignorant of material comfort extols eagerly its genius for the mystic life. A China that has failed to develop its natural resources explains its devotion to reflective wisdom. An England still semi-feudal insists upon the zeal of its aristocracy for public service. An America that does not know where it is going proclaims the splendor of speed for its own sake. We wear our failures as a favor of which the beauty can never be too passionately praised.

From a world of habit and routine, in other words, we seek escape into the Utopia of contrast. Its legends of enchantment intoxicate us, and we insist that our faith, at least, is not a fairy tale. The chiefest of them, in Western civilization, is the legend of useless knowledge. We endow it upon a scale of unexampled magnificence. It has buildings midway between a factory and a cathedral.

It has books by the square mile, and instructors by the thousand. These are the temples of the academic mind, the habitations, we tell ourselves, of men devoted to the contemplation of eternal truth. We ourselves, the creatures of habit and routine, would escape there could the world but move without us. But the quest of the eternal is a whole-time occupation, and we cannot follow its trail. Ours only to endow and to control. We are the acolytes of the legend. For the priesthood itself we lack the true vocation.

But it is deep comfort, in a grimly acquisitive society, to know that the priests move at their task. They are—it is the convention of their profession—socially awkward, pathetically unpractical, inevitably underpaid. Secretly, too, we may feel that, at bottom, they are not unakin to the court jesters of an earlier time, men paid to banish the worldly cares which pain by their obtrusiveness. It is a pleasant thing, after a heavy day in Wall Street, to read Professor Blank's lyrical ecstasy to our unexampled collection of the minor works of Swift. But, as we contemplate the press and hurry about us, it is in general still more pleasant to know of a place where men are remote from, and careless of, the commonplace immediacies of the marketplace.

They are rigorously impartial, weighed down with learning, impervious to the self-interest by which our own lives are shaped. They dwell upon those lofty heights of which the very distance from earth gives new horizons and splendid vistas.

They pursue knowledge relentlessly for its own sake. In patronizing them we confer a kind of distinction upon ourselves. We have an inner sense that to share, however remotely, in their other-worldliness is self-purification. We send our sons to meet them in Oxford and Harvard, in Cambridge and in Princeton, as savage tribes set a period apart at the dawn of adult ways for initiation into manhood. Our sons, of course, do not stay there. A few brief years, and they, too, are in Wall Street or the Temple. But they have seen the priesthood, have caught the reverence for learning, and will carry on the endowment of the academic mind. Professors, for us, are the accepted playboys of the Western world. We collect them as the mediæval baron sought for the bones of saints, the Renaissance princeling his Holbeins and Leonardos. They are the proof of our idealism, the evidence that the genius of patronage did not die with the eclipse of aristocracy. We ourselves, we sometimes intimate, should like nothing better

than devotion to these mysteries, could we but be spared from that industrial leadership the world expects from us. We cannot so be spared; the call to sacrifice is insistent. But in admiring the academic mind we can at least help to pass on undimmed the torch of learned life.

II

How does the practical man conceive to himself the nature of the academic mind? He thinks, for the most part, of three or four outstanding qualities. There is a precious innocence in the factual world of common sense. The professor is a man of theory, delightful, of course, impossibly learned, but devoted to the spinning of cobwebs which do not impinge upon the practical life. His economic theories explain Crusoe, but not Mr. Rockefeller; his ethics would be admirable, like those of the Sermon on the Mount, in any other world than this; his political philosophy forgets Mr. Platt and Mayor Thompson and the fact that only Nordics are really political animals. His instruction doubtless sharpens the mind (statistics of graduate incomes are not unsatisfactory), and there is a passport to desirable social connections

in a university degree. But the academic mind could not run a business. The academic mind would be out of place in the presidency of the United States or the cabinet of Great Britain. What we need there are men who know the world as it is, and not the dream world of the theorist. Academic minds are too remote from reality to be helpful when the need comes for decisive acts.

For the academic mind, as the practical man tells himself, is occupied with useless learning and speculation at the circumference of life. He comments upon Scaliger's edition of Manilius' *Astronomica* and relives the exciting glory of that tremendous achievement. He writes the history of the German idea of the corporation before the seventeenth century and excitedly maintains that the Reception was a blow to freedom. He traces with loving care the nature of pastoral theology in seventeenth-century Massachusetts, and the cultivated practical man can hardly resist an involuntary gesture of reverence for Cotton Mather's admirable firmness with the Bolsheviks of his time. Or he may be a physicist who annihilates the accepted notions of space and time, depicting a universe so gloriously unintelligible that it becomes almost fashionable to read some little manual on

his theme. He may be a chemist who has investigated with exquisite exactness atomic weights to the eleventh place of decimals. He may be—what a theme for an introduction at a dinner-party!—the greatest living expert upon prime numbers. The biologist whose course your son is attending has written the supreme monograph upon the molluscs of central Paraguay. These are the regions within which the practical man expects the academic mind to dwell. So long as he fulfills these functions he can be regarded as an ornament to civilization.

For he is then like a valuable tapestry or a precious fan in a drawing-room. Interesting anecdotes will accumulate around him. Like Kant to the citizens of Königsberg, his habits will become traditions to be carefully preserved. He may even display that glorious forgetfulness of Hegel who, so the story runs, did not, in his zest for philosophic thought, hear the guns of Jena outside his study windows. Practical men who know nothing of James the psychologist have infinite tales of the mediums who deceived him. McTaggart who wrote the most destructive onslaught of our time upon religious dogma survives in London clubs as a man with superhuman knowledge of Brad-

shaw. Willard Gibbs, one of the four seminal minds in the physics of the nineteenth century, survived to a Yale acquaintance of mine as a man who did not know how to invest a small legacy. Politicians as a whole cannot be said to have made an outstanding success of their *métier*; but when President Wilson failed at Versailles it was because he "approached the subject with an academic mind." The professor, in short, is a museum-piece to the practical man. He collects him as he collects incunabula, or Rembrandts, or Ming vases. And no amount of collector's points in the specimen will ever compensate for the presence of normality. For this is the quality of the practical man, and the thesis demands its opposite in the academic mind.

III

The thesis, said Hegel, begets its antithesis. The world is run by practical men; theirs is the power and the glory. What they do is news. What they acquire makes for a life in which ease and beauty are at least within reach. They fashion the ambitions of their subordinates. They model the universe to their pattern. It is a theme of the economic

historians that the civilization of a given time is begotten by its system of production. The way in which men earn their living is the way in which their philosophy, their religion, their ideals will be shaped. The practical man was compelled during the nineteenth century not only to build universities, but to control them. He intended, doubtless, as in the past, that professors in them should spin exquisite theories and think beautiful thoughts. But the professors saw the great world at their doors. They heard the practical men extolled as the directors of the universe. They saw that they were poor; they felt that they had no part in the making of supreme decisions. Though they were professors, they were human, and they determined to be practical men.

The passionate intensity of their determination has exhibited itself in innumerable ways. In part, of course, it was the inevitable outcome of the marriage of science to industry, of the need for better hygiene and a more rational medicine. The business man found himself compelled to come to the university for his experts. He learned that in a law case two or three academic minds are valuable as witnesses. He was taught that where political corruption is too outrageous, a profes-

sorial report, or a professor's name as signatory to a report, carries with it a sense of possible impartiality to an angry public. He did not dare to neglect physics or chemistry, engineering or medicine. As the problems accumulated with the evolution of an electorate which passed from doubt of the Divine Right of Kings to doubt of the Divine Right of business men, he found that he needed the academic mind in problems of national frontiers, in questions of banking and currency, in difficulties that arose in connection with native races. Sometimes he took academic advice and paid heavily for it; sometimes, again, he trusted his intuitive judgment in its face and paid still more heavily. Occasionally he even bought out an academic mind for his bank or factory, or took over a chemist to his experimental laboratory. He met professors increasingly often and found them convinced that they had a part to play in shaping the policy of the state. They pronounced on labor questions; they had political views; they even ventured dogmas of their own in the religious sphere. When, as the apotheosis of the academic mind, he met the professor at his Rotary Club, the practical man must have felt that his monop-

oly of common sense was threatened at its strategic center.

Nothing, indeed, is so out of date as the picture of the average professor as an unworldly and abstract philosopher devoted to the analysis of first principles. Such professors exist, and they are doubtless the glory of the academic world. Alexander and Whitehead and Morris Cohen in philosophy, Eddington and Michelson in physics; Turner and Tout in history—men like these continue to settle *hoti's* business in the approved manner of Browning's grammarian. The young candidate for the graduate degree continues damnably to reiterate his minutiæ and to publish his intolerable *inédits*. I open the last number of a famous literary journal and find upon its correspondence page that a man still yearns to write a book upon John Thelwall, who is worth, perhaps, a half-column obituary notice in a biographical dictionary; and a new life of Francis Jeffrey who, after a century, is perhaps worth a longish essay in the Macaulay manner. The young academic aspirant will still show for years to come that, were it necessary, he could display the academic mind by a learned tome upon the possessive genitive in Tacitus or adjectives in middle-English

signifying heat and light, both, of course, replete with bibliography and *apparatus criticus*. But, today, these are exercises in method, a milestone on the road, not a lifelong habit to be cherished as precious. The doctorate today is rather proof that its recipient is ready to be a practical man.

This means, in general, one of two things. The modern professor will be either a writer of textbooks, or, in his supreme expression, an expert in his subject. He will compile his annual volume upon some selected theme within his province, a history of England, a history of America, a history of France. If he is a lawyer he will do his case-book. If he is a professor of literature he will edit some classic text. There are endless students today (since we have realized the civic import of the higher education) waiting for the pemmicanized manual whereby the right facts can be memorized without the grim need to omit the irrelevant and the inessential which caught the great man's fancy when he wrote. The elementary classes in the great universities in major themes like economics, or history, or politics number hundreds; and there are hundreds of colleges as multiplier. Let the professor write but two or three successful books, and he will rank in the income-tax returns

as an almost successful business man. He will drop over to Europe in the summer or even join a neighboring golf club. Prosperity will bring him to orthodox opinion, and he will find that mystic connection which so impresses Main Street between President Coolidge and Prosperity. At college he will have office hours and a stenographer. His lectures will become well-organized formulæ that he repeats from year to year, a standardized product as much the outcome of mass-methods of output as the cars of Detroit or the furniture of Grand Rapids. He will buy a little on margins, and his stockbroker will whisper faintly that he can meet his differences. *Beati possidentes* is his motto, and the accusation can never be made against him that he toys with the infinite or the heterodox.

Alternatively, he is an expert, and, at this height, he commands an ever higher esteem. For if it be war-time he can prove that Kant or Hegel or Nietzsche begat the great War; that Danzig is obviously Polish; that Austro-Hungary is an historic outrage. He can prove that Prussian militarism would be the death-blow to freedom, or that Germany's capacity to pay is in the dimensions of the infinite. Since the general public in-

sists on a decent volume of facts to cover the nakedness of its burdens, since, too, the practical man is helpless before the printed page, the academic expert is here invaluable. He produces unanswerable memoranda with the same bewildering profusion as a conjurer his rabbits from the hat, and if the practical politician changes his ground, the academic expert produces equally unanswerable memoranda on the other side. The voice of the new reason which speaks as necessity requires is obviously a weapon no practical man may neglect.

Peace, of course, is less dramatic than war; but even in these times the value of the academic expert is beyond discussion. He can show by irrefutable economic principle that trade unions cannot raise the rate of wages. He can demonstrate that a too-rigid adherence to democratic methods is woeful error, since the mental age of the average man is no more than fourteen years. He can explain how, by a mechanism almost divine in its exquisite simplicity, the marginal utility of capitalist economics pays to each wage-earner exactly what he is worth. He can show that there is a direct relation between intelligence and earning power. If it is desired to restrict immigration from

the Latin peoples, he can prove to demonstration that the race which produced Dante and Machiavelli and Cavour is intellectually inferior to the Nordic peoples. When, as in England, socialism threatens to capture the House of Commons, he can prove that it is axiomatic in political science that a strong second chamber should protect the people against the rashness of an elected assembly. When the democratic synthesis, by seizing the imagination of the multitude, seeks to invade the industrial sphere, he is able to show that the case for democratic government is merely an impermanent moment in the history of institutions.

In the eighteenth century English political parties had their licensed pamphleteers who conveyed to the multitude the case for their convictions. The academic expert plays, the world over, a similar part today. Inconveniently, of course, he will not always speak upon the right side. Perverse people, like Professor Gide, or Mr. Keynes, will urge that the economic principles of Versailles are disastrous; Professor Frankfurter, entirely forgetting that Sacco and Vanzetti were Italian anarchists, will demand for them the same justice they would receive if they were Mr. Daugherty or Mr. Sinclair; Mr. R. H. Tawney will even suggest

that property is incapable of justification save in terms of social value. But men such as these, Professor Fay, for instance, who writes of the Great War with the same serene detachment he might apply to the struggle of Hellas with Persia, are obviously remnants of the earlier period. They bear the same relation to the types of our own day as fossil fauna to the living creatures in a zoölogical garden. In general, the academic expert is definitely right-minded. Though four men are killed each working-day in the British coal mines, an eminent professor of physiology was ready to show that mining is a peculiarly healthy occupation. When British dockers explained to the Transport Workers' Commission that they could not live on their wages, a distinguished professor of statistics showed immediately that they calculated needs upon a grossly excessive dietary. Every profession breeds its heretics and extremists, as a rule its failures; but fortunately enough, they are rare. And to those who would curtail the academic freedom which makes them possible, it is sufficient to point out that there are even lawyers who favor reform of the law.

We must remember the type, and not the divergence from it. In general, the academic expert

has served the practical man supremely well. He has produced the right theories at the right time, and they have had a wonderful air of being born of the inescapable rigor of facts. His tables and footnotes, especially where they were not read, have usually carried conviction. He has shown a proper hatred of abstractions. He has increasingly refused to dwell too largely upon foundations, a habit which, as Edmund Burke has said, is always a symptom of disease in the body politic. He has shown that disposition to preserve and that ability to prove that, though reform in itself is desirable, this is never the right time for reform, which are the obvious marks of practical sagacity. It can even be argued that the dissidents themselves from the prevailing outlook have proved invaluable since they can be offered as evidence of academic independence of mind.

We may go even farther and insist that the practical men have offered proof of their faith in the academic mind by the share they have taken in the government of universities. Ideas, they have come to realize, are of an explosive nature; and it is well to examine the character of those entrusted with such dangerous material. Were the professor the dreamy idealist of the nineteenth

century, the practical man would not have devoted the energies of his scanty leisure to the promotion of academic well-being. The post-war increases of salary offered interesting proof of his understanding that discontented professoriate made for intellectual danger. The recent discovery that the public utility corporations were accustomed liberally to endow the development of scientific views upon the interest they represented is a minor variation upon the same theme. The increasing share of the great foundations in academic evolution, their important tendency to encourage research of an ever more practical type, and to promote in the universities the growth and power of the professor gifted with "executive" talent is convincing proof of the same theorem. It would not, perhaps, be going beyond the mark to define the average academic mind of today as that of a practical man who has, at least in the major universities, exchanged wealth and power for dignity and security.

IV

The practical men were right enough when they undertook to rule the universities. For in the

age of science knowledge is power, and access to ideas is access to the source of power. Practical men who control the press and the academic mind have in their hands the two main instruments by which the formation of opinion is effected. Had these remained independent of their interests there would have been at large in society a critical and transforming force that might well have proved fatal to the exercise of their authority. Broken to the service of practical men—subtly broken, be it added, since, in large part, they believe themselves impartial and free—the professors have proved an invaluable instrument for the intensification of that control. A world dominated by science is inevitably a complex world; and, as Russia is slowly learning, to train the academic mind to the service of one type of civilization makes it difficult to use its knowledge in the transition to another. The alliance between business men and the higher institutions of learning is one of the chief safeguards of capitalist society.

Yet the practical man was also right when he thought of the academic mind as unworldly and devoted to useless learning. Every university contains queer professors so driven by the impulse of curiosity that nothing in the world matters save

the satisfaction of their hunger. They must find a truth and proclaim it. Knowledge and the implications of knowledge, do genuinely mean more to them than comfort or dignity and security. Like the artist and the poet and the musician, they have in them some demon which must be satisfied. They have raw facts about them, and they must somehow find an explanation which fits those facts. They rarely care very much for the consequences which follow from their explanation. Here it may be F. A. Wolf disturbing all accepted notions of the Homeric poems; there it may be Baur with his Tubingen hypothesis; it is Clerk-Maxwell in Cambridge, Michelson in Chicago, Parrington in Seattle. The old notions will not do for them; and in that private world where the most intimate part of them dwells, real revolutions occur. They probably lack altogether the genius for ordering men. They cannot perceive the importance of authority. They are queer, a little unbalanced, unmoved by the normal standards deemed adequate by the world. They will not, above all, serve practical men. They cannot be regimented and controlled. They cannot be persuaded that, in particular realms, ideas are dan-

gerous, and not to be tossed lightly to the multitude. They have to communicate the truths they have found because, like all great artists, they are born teachers; and silence for them in the realm they deem supremely important is worse than death.

When the academic mind is this, no practical man can ever hope that its governance will pass into his hands. He will always find it restless and uncomfortable. He will never quite know what it is going to say next. He will always be disturbed by its habit of questioning accepted values, disturbing equilibria that he had thought fixed and final. What is a French Minister of Education to do with Alain, who does not desire promotion, and announces, with calm seriousness, that Jules Lagneau, of whom the Minister has never heard, is the only great man he has ever met? What is a millionaire to make of a mind like Morris Cohen's, which holds esteem for Duns Scotus, Bernard of Clairvaux, Spinoza, and Bertrand Russell, but certainly for no figure of eminence in the world of industrial enterprise? What is an English politician to make of Professor Gilbert Murray who draws from the study of Cleon and

political parties in Athens, the lesson that Mr. Lloyd George's Coalition government corrupted the political life of his country? What can the practical man grasp in that eternal challenge to English complacency which Matthew Arnold—a typical academic mind—flung at it in his famous "choose equality and flee greed"? He cannot tell to what academic theorizing may lead. Clerk-Maxwell's speculations on the ether may lead to Hertzian waves, which, in turn, lead to the wireless industry. Nettleship's lectures on Plato's *Republic* may help to form a new outlook for English Liberalism. Turner and Beard may so rewrite the history of American politics that the old satisfaction with a constitution intended as a safeguard against social democracy may never again be possible to their students. A pupil of Haskins or McIlwain will learn an intellectual integrity from their methods of handling evidence fatal to the ordinary conventions of adequacy. Those who have listened to Allyn Young are never again persuaded to easy confidence in "economic laws."

There is, in short, a certainty that the academic mind of this sort will produce at the least some-

thing cleansing and unexpected. It will challenge the conventions it encounters simply because those conventions are, almost invariably, convenient hypotheses imposed upon a generation by those who hold the keys of power. And the challenge will permeate the minds of those who encounter it. Let the university do what it can to enforce orthodoxy and a normal outlook, one great academic mind will by its teaching destroy the utmost its effort can make. And that mind will be the more disturbing because the drive within it produces conviction without. Its own sense of the urgency of new truth is compelling. At the best, it will leave a skepticism of the established; at the worst, it will overthrow it. Nor must it be forgotten that the main importance of its operations lies not in the results themselves but in the habits of mind, candor, doubt, integrity which the method of attaining them unconsciously imposes. Here is a realm utterly unsusceptible to organization and control. Not the most grim and determined body of trustees, not the most servile of university presidents, possesses here sanctions of conduct which can even hope for effectiveness. The great teacher will teach greatly; and, do what we will, the consequence of great teaching is the sense in those

taught that actual social institutions are not coincident with the inevitable foundations of society.

V

Let it be freely admitted that the great academic mind is rare; there are thousands of bad violinists for one Paganini. Let it be admitted, too, that there is nothing duller than the dull academic mind except the dull practical man. We meet mediocrity everywhere; and perhaps because the average university offers special prospects of security, in the university it is too often enthroned. As a rule, he is an expert in some tiny field and equates his specialty with the universe. Outside its confines he steadfastly refuses to wander. His subject is the youth of Lincoln, and he would not be a scholar if he dared to pronounce judgment upon the problems of Lincoln's maturity. He has found a letter from the great man, written in 1834, but he is not going to publish it just yet for fear that Professor Jones may anticipate the inferences he will found upon it. Or he may lack the constructive mind, and live his life as the collector of learned minutiæ which he does not publish but stores up as weapons for a destructive review of a

colleague's book. There are incredibly learned dons at Oxford, terrified themselves to write, but waiting with calm joy to demolish the rash scholar who ventures upon a volume in their field. Lord Morley, indeed, with certain grim memories in his mind of the reviewers' habits in the 'eighties once defined an Oxford don as a man who plans a work in seven volumes and dies in the middle of the first. The type is not confined to Oxford, and it is not rare. It cannot build; it can sometimes accumulate and almost always criticize. It has too seldom the generosity of men like Ingram Bywater or Henry Jackson from whose immense stores of unpublished learning other men have been able to write their books.

Sometimes, again, the academic mind reveals itself not as scholar but pontiff. It finds itself in a professorial chair and, instead of playing devil's advocate to its students, it produces its pretty little set of orthodoxies which the undergraduate rejects at his peril. It never revises its principles; it never finds it necessary to be skeptical of itself. It finds early in life a convenient system of categories, and these remain its tyrants to the end. Year in and year out it proclaims its nostrums; and they have the same unvarying monotony as the insurance

company's demand for an annual premium. It may be laid down with some conviction that the pontifical professor is mentally dead. Some accident or other, a trick of eloquence, a power of dubious simplification, a youthful promise which colleagues still pray may be fulfilled, has prevented his burial. His mind has intellectual sclerosis, and the harder its outer shell, the greater the degree of his pontificality.

Sometimes, the professor is obsessed by the politics of his profession. He is immersed in the *paperasserie* of the university, loves its card-indexes, its soul-destroying committees, its complicated intrigues for promotion or an increase in the departmental budget. Your academic statesman rarely devotes himself to scholarship, though there may have been a time when he gave prospect of achievement; usually he confines himself to a Commencement address on the vocation of the scholar or the place of the university in the modern state. His object is power, and direct is the road upon which he marches to it. He can estimate the intellectual standing of all his colleagues, however different their subjects from his own. He stands well with the trustees. He is an easy conversationalist, and a mellifluous speaker. He is

careful, as a rule, to explain that he stands apart from the public controversies of the time; "he does not believe that a university should meddle with politics," or, alternatively, "scholarship and teaching are a full-time job." He has real genius in appointing his students to suitable posts, and his colleagues must take care not to offend him. He is methodical, quick to take points, full of zeal for organization. He is comforted by increased endowments and bigger buildings. He does not like dangerous academic minds, since these prevent the flow of manna from the heaven of the practical man. He is quite often selfless, and, as a rule, he genuinely loves the university he adorns. *Corruptio optimi pessima*; and he has no notion how power corrodes the heart and dulls imaginative insight. For power searches always for routine, and when the academic politician becomes a university president there is nothing he so subconsciously fears as the genuinely inventive mind.

VI

If an industrial civilization can leave the universities genuinely unfettered, the academic mind has, at its best, a great part to play in the future

of civilization. Its business is to do what practical men have never the time nor the knowledge to attempt—the cutting of fundamental principle from the raw material. No task could well be more difficult. It means searching for unpredictable results which may have consequences which frustrate your desires. It means a continuous suspension of judgment before the facts, the recognition that the inconvenient and the unexpected may turn out in the end to be truth. "To think great thoughts," Mr. Justice Holmes has written, "you must be heroes as well as idealists." The academic mind that is to perform its function must never falter before the duty to announce its insight. The more inconvenient, the more unexpected, the less welcome it will be; there is nothing that those in power dislike so much as criticism of the assumptions upon which they rest. Yet the academic mind is untrue to itself unless it is willing to go into the wilderness for its convictions. It is, indeed, in the very difficulty of persuading men to the acceptance of new truth that the supreme worth of the effort should be found.

What, then, should be the relation of the practical man to the academic mind? The answer is

that the relation should be as distant as is compatible with academic efficiency. It cannot be complete separation, if only because that makes of universities closed corporations inaccessible to new ideas; the syndicalist government of Oxford and Cambridge has involved a reforming commission in each generation of the modern time. But, short of complete separation, the greater the distance the better the result. Once practical men begin to meddle with universities mediocrity within is given its opportunity. Orthodoxy becomes the ideal in any subject of social import. Volume of publication becomes the measure of academic quality. The skillful popularizer, whom the practical man can read with pleasure, is almost inevitably mistaken for the scholar. What is the intellectual fashion of the moment is developed and cultivated at the expense of what is basic. The administrator becomes more important than the teacher, and the glib professor whose results are immediate and obviously useful, is invariably preferred to the lonely scholar who moves hesitatingly to a goal he hardly knows how to define. The university, at the best, becomes a semi-technical school; and, at the worst, a graceful academy where the sons of practical men learn

that modicum of cultivation which social success demands. But the university that is free builds an atmosphere of creativeness for the great thinker who finds place there, and the generations that are to come move in response to the measure of his thought.

FOUNDATIONS, UNIVERSITIES, AND RESEARCH

It seems fated that the social sciences should take over their methodology from sister-disciplines which aim at, and achieve, results which are not open to those who study human relations. In the eighteenth century the achievements of Newton led students of politics to find in physical analogies the sovereign key to their problems; in the nineteenth century the discoveries of Darwin made the pursuit of biological metaphor the favorite sport of almost every thinker with a book to write. In our own day the symbols are drawn from another field. It has become fashionable for the observer to apply to the social process the latest discoveries of psychology; and the complexes of the statesman, the listed impulses of the man in the street, the unreasoning instincts of men acting as a crowd are all joyously scrutinized as the home of the final secret. Somehow, it seems to be thought, psychology at least will give us a social law of gravitation.

But a new technic has appeared, the votaries of which are as ardent in their faith as ever were the followers of a religious creed. In the past, for the most part, men analyzed in solitude the facts before them; and they put down, without much mutual discussion, such vision as was vouchsafed to them. This procedure, it appears, was an error of high magnitude. "We risk waste effort," writes Professor Wesley Mitchell, "when we use our narrowly limited individual resources in attacking problems which might yield to joint endeavors. The mathematical, physical, and biological sciences were first in this country to organize an effort to see their problems whole and to facilitate coöperation among specialists concerned with clusters of problems. But shortly after the National Research Council was formed several representatives of political science, economics, sociology, and statistics came together for a similar purpose. Out of this informal beginning the Social Science Research Council developed in 1923. It was presently strengthened and broadened by the accession of psychologists, anthropologists, and historians." And out of these small beginnings there has developed an organization of considerable magni-

tude, with its executive, its conferences, its committees on problems and policy, its advisory committees on method, agriculture, corporate relations, crime, cultural areas, migration, industrial relations, and the rest, its grants-in-aid to the established, and its fellowships to the immature. We need, it seems to affirm, to proceed upon the principles of mass-production: division of labor at the base, scientific assembling of the material prepared at the top. When this is done in each department of social science we shall have—at least we may hope—laws of political behavior the exactitude of which will be comparable to those of chemistry or of physics. The work now afoot may, a generation from now, come to mark an epoch in the development of social science.

And Professor Mitchell would, I think, agree that the universities have gone to work with a stout heart and an iron will. No university today is complete without its research institute; no foundation is worthy of the name unless its directors are anxiously scanning the horizon for suitable universities which can be endowed with such institutes. There are few universities where the movement is not away from the discussion of prin-

ciple to the description and tabulation of fact. Everything is being turned into material for quantitative expression since this best yields to coöperative effort. We investigate output per man per hour per machine in every industry and in every country. We study the movement of prices in every century and every continent. We describe the tax system, or the method of railroad regulation, or the promotion system in the civil service in India and China, in Italy and Albania and Japan. Research associations in the different social sciences are passionately at work, devising methods, comparing methods, holding conferences "for consecutive thinking and planning not feasible at other seasons." We have bibliographies of special subjects and bibliographies of bibliographies. We have brief abstracts of papers, and long abstracts of papers; soon we are to have a whole journal composed of nothing but abstracts.

And, of course, we study what we do. The research institutes report to the universities; the universities report to the directors of foundations; the directors of foundations report to their trustees; the trustees seek reports from detached outsiders upon the reports they have received. Conferences

are held for the reception of reports; and men are judged by the impression of them the reports convey. Trustees look to university presidents to pick the professors likely to attract endowments from the foundations; university presidents look for professors who can produce the kind of research in which the foundations are interested; professors search for healthy young graduates who can provide the basis for the ultimate generalizations. There are endless committees to coördinate or correlate or integrate. There are new executive positions for men who do not themselves research but judge whether other people are suitable for the task of research. These are formidable people, widely traveled, gracious, but firm in manner, as befits men who have vast benefactions to dispense. There are interim reports, special reports, confidential reports, final reports. There are programs for the development of every theme. There are surveys for the dissection of every problem, industrial, racial, national, international. There are experimental centers, statistical centers, analytical centers. More energy, I venture to believe, has gone this last five years into the systematization of research in this field than in any previous generation of intellectual effort.

II

If I suggest here certain skepticisms as to the policy involved, it is with no feeling except one of admiration for the ardor and enthusiasm which has gone into the effort. My doubts center about three aspects of the situation. I doubt whether the results to be achieved are likely to be proportionate to the labor involved. I doubt, in the second place, whether the effect upon university institutions is likely, in the long run, to be healthy; and I doubt, in the third place, whether the result of the policy will not be to give to the foundations a dominating control over university life which they quite emphatically ought not to have.

Let me take each of these aspects separately. In the social sciences every investigator has two great problems. He has first of all to find his facts, and secondly, he has to assign a scheme of values to them. They are not, as William James said, born free and equal. They have to be weighted. They have to be given a significance most of which depends upon the personal philosophy of the individual investigator. If, for instance, I tabulate the membership of the English Cabinet since 1801,

and discover that some sixty per cent were born of immediately aristocratic parentage, I have merely provided a basis for interpretations of the most diverse kind. I may take the result to mean the fine determination of the English peerage to devote itself to public service; I may take it to measure the differential advantage an English aristocrat possesses when he embarks upon a political career; or I may take it as a criterion of the degree to which the English social system puts barriers in the way of the common man who desires to distinguish himself in political life. Obviously enough, my interpretation will largely depend upon my personal scheme of values. The latter has no validity until it has the facts upon which to work. It becomes of intense importance as soon as the facts are at its disposal.

Now my own argument is that coöperative research is of high value once it has been determined to find a body of facts; it is of dubious value in determining what body of facts would be significant when found, and of still more dubious value in assigning values to them after their discovery. For the proof of these things I appeal to anyone who has ever engaged seriously in the business of research. One finds a problem which clamors for

solution. One begins to dig, and the mere process of digging by oneself is a definite means of illumination. One gets material, broods upon it, arranges it, dissects it, discusses it. It becomes a part of one's personality. It becomes absorbed into the whole scheme of one's philosophy. It gives point and color to the whole. It is intimately a part of oneself. The revelation of what it seems to imply is borne in upon one almost unconsciously by living with it. And the generalization is made, usually in a difficult solitude, and in a mood which, if it is akin to anything, is essentially allied to artistic inspiration. That is why, I would add, the great scientist, the great philosopher, the great historian have always been in their essence great artists.

If it is the thesis of coöperative research that it can replace the process I have just described, my answer is that it is simply untrue; and that it is untrue even in the mathematical, physical, and biological sciences which are adduced in proof of the proposition. If that is not the claim, then my argument is that the place for coöperative research is in aiding the thinker to secure the best possible materials in the easiest possible way for his thought. Coöperative research, in other words, stands to the social sciences in the same relation as

computing to the astronomer or as the making of slides or the provision of animals for dissection to the biologist. He indicates what he wants, and the materials are placed at his disposal. His eyes, his time, his energy have been saved. But the really vital task is still his, and no amount of coöperation can ever replace his vital duty to do it himself. Coöperation can suggest questions to be asked, difficulties to be considered, material to be searched. It cannot replace, and it has never adequately replaced, the vision and the insight of the individual thinker.

It is, of course, all to the good that men engaged in these disciplines should meet and talk over their common problems. It is all to the good, also, that they should pool their common knowledge and suggest lines of inquiry which their experience as investigators indicates to them as desirable. Every university teacher who is worth his salt is doing that every day as a matter of normal routine. It does not need any elaborate organization to make it possible; indeed, it is likely to be the more fruitful the less it assumes a formal shape. And so far as aid in the collection of material is concerned, and its reduction to usable form, that is either a matter for the trained computer, or else for the

young graduate student who is learning the business of serious research. If the latter has real ability he will not do it for long; the call to original investigation of a superior kind is too insistent to be stifled. Here, again, it is extraordinarily difficult to see why there is need for elaborate institutes of research, with executive staffs and growing hordes of faded underlings. Anyone who has done investigation knows that their aid at the critical point is essentially a *pis aller*. Once the stage has been reached where judgments have to be made, the investigator, like the soldier at headquarters, must make his own decisions and stand or fall by them. He will never see clearly if he is content to see through other men's eyes.

All this applies with especial force to the immense apparatus of bibliography and abstraction now being prepared for his assistance. A fairly long experience has taught me that if of the listing of titles there is no end, most of them are not worth listing and do not repay investigation. What one wants is the critical bibliography—like those, for instance, of Charles Gross—which warn as well as encourage. Essentially the same is true of abstracts. Either a paper is worth reading as a whole, in which case one merely wants its title,

or it is not worth reading at all, in which case to make an abstract is a waste of time and money. Yet thousands of dollars are being spent annually in America on bibliographies which are a snare and a delusion; and one of the greatest foundations has just devoted half a million dollars to a journal which is simply to contain abstracts of articles in the social sciences. It is not, I think, going beyond the mark to describe most of this expenditure as simply wasted. I can have confidence in, say, a book on American history recommended to me by Professor Turner, or in one on economics recommended to me by Professor Allyn Young; but if I have merely a title from an unknown bibliographer who has probably not examined the book, in the absence of other information, I save my eyes and my time.

It is, indeed, an excellent side of this coöperative research that it should lead to the award of fellowships to young men of promise in the hope that their leisure may bear fruit in research. But here it is imperative to award the fellowship essentially on promise and not because a student proposes to examine some subject in a list of which the research institute or committee has approved. Anyone who reads the output of books on this side of

the problem cannot help but doubt whether it is promise that comes first. So many of the themes chosen are hackneyed; so many of them are really matter for an article rather than a book. Few of them deserve to be printed, and fewer still are ever reprinted. Let the reader take the long lists of doctoral dissertations published by the Library of Congress and he will observe, on any careful examination, that most of them were intellectually dead before they were born. And the trouble is, further, that under the blessing of a planning committee, a young man who has been assigned a fellowship for a given theme must continue his researches in that surrounding field unless he desires a reputation for instability of mental temper. A young professor who had investigated a small subject as it exists in America and had come to England for a year to investigate the same theme here paid me a visit. All that he could want to know about it, he could have learned in six weeks. But what with his bibliographies and card-indexes, he was able quite without effort to spend his full quota of time upon material unworthy of his powers. Some of my colleagues and I tried vainly to tempt him into alien paths; but he seemed to feel

that it was not the part of academic wisdom to venture upon the unexpected.

On this head, then, I venture the guess that, compared to the results attainable, the money spent on the collection and preparation of material is enormously disproportionate. I know, on incontrovertible authority, of an American foundation which has produced a single volume at a cost of eighty thousand dollars; and I do not think that volume could be regarded as epoch-making. I know of another foundation each of whose efforts has cost some eight or nine thousand dollars; all of them have had a largely temporary value, and few of them have done other than summarize, often with admirable vigor and accuracy, material easily available elsewhere. Even where the valuable work is being done of giving grants-in-aid to deserving scholars, the cost of the panoply of investigating the claim, deciding upon its merits, and allocating the sum decided upon is greatly in excess of anything necessary. Most of it could quite easily be unpaid work, done by other scholars for love of their subject; and this method would usually save many a scholar many heartburnings as he seeks to explain his purposes to a bright young, or pompous old, executive of some foundation, to

whom the very meaning of research is, in any effectively creative sense, entirely unknown.

III

I turn to the second aspect of the problem: the effect of the system upon the universities. Here, the controlling fact is that the great foundations have immense sums to disburse. It is the inevitable result that an energetic university president or an ambitious university teacher should think out his plans in terms of what the foundation is likely to approve. Certain obvious consequences follow. "Dangerous" problems are not likely to be investigated, especially not by "dangerous" men; that would not win the esteem of the trustees who can be counted upon to dislike disturbing themes. I know, for instance, of an important project, brought to a point after long and difficult negotiation, which was killed by a foundation in the belief that its completion would be displeasing to Signor Mussolini. And it must be remembered that the system, as it works, is all to the disadvantage of the scholar whose results, however important, come slowly. The president wants material for a formidable annual report which will obtain

a renewal of the grant. Other things being equal, his blessing goes to the members of the staff who can give him material for such a report; and, where vacancies occur, search will be made for men of a similar stamp elsewhere. The personnel of the university, in a word, comes to be dominated by the "executive" type of professor, who is active in putting its goods into the shop-window. The university with a big grant has its place in the press. The president is marked out as a man able to do things. The enthusiasm for quantity—the most insidious of all academic diseases—grows by what it feeds on. Those who cannot aid the development of the new tendencies find themselves without influence and discouraged. Men, only too often, are judged by their output; and, as soon as that point is reached, they spend their time, not in reflection upon ultimate principle, but in the description of social machinery or the collection of materials. It is the business of a university to breed great scholars; and in such an atmosphere great scholars will hardly be bred.

Nor must we neglect the effect of this upon the teaching in the university itself. Anyone who analyzes in this regard the tendencies in social science will, I think, be struck by two things. There

is an increasing drift away from the study of basic principles and towards the study of concrete facts; and there is an increasing disposition to give the student practical field-work of some kind. I speak here, of course, of the undergraduate period. Of that stage, whether in England or America, I can only say this: it is all that a teacher can hope to do, even with an able student, in the time at his disposal, to make the student aware of the fundamental problems in his subject. His main urgency must be the attempt to clear away the bewildering mass of detail and to make the student see a few big general principles in firm outline. I taught in American universities for four years; and I have had many American students since my return to London. My difficulty with them has always been that, though they have been taught to assimilate masses of fact, they have rarely learned to reflect upon the scheme of values they ought to read into those facts. Still more rarely do they attempt that integration of the social sciences which Professor Mitchell declares it is one of the purposes of coöperative research to attain. They keep their principles of economics in one compartment, and their principles of politics in another. They even more rarely relate the social sciences to philosophy, or

glimpse the significance of that totality of vision which Professor Whitehead has set out with such magistral nobility. Only principles at this stage will cause them the intellectual excitement which is the main business of him who teaches undergraduates; and the passion for pouring upon him masses of concrete description prevents him from penetrating beyond them to their real significance.

One of the universities most noted for its adherence to this method of research tells us with enthusiasm of how the new technic has vivified its methods of teaching. Students are enabled to embark upon "field-work" in their courses; they gain a living sense of the concrete material. They learn, we are to assume, that "pungent sense of effective reality" which tears through the miasma of dialectic. But here, surely, there are many things to be said. If a student grapples with a big body of material, seeks to arrange it, and to discover its significance, no one can doubt that the experience will be of high value to him. Probably what he has to report about it will not be very valuable; but he will experience something of the excitement that comes to a young lawyer who handles his first case in court. That, however, is not what is meant by "field-work" in the new sense of the

word. It means that the student goes out and collects a body of facts for his teacher, that he coöperates with the latter in some part of an investigation. Now if that is done on any considerable scale it is taking the student's mind away from essentials; it is teaching him not to inquire and to evaluate, but to describe. It is computer's work made better only to the degree that the teacher later explains what meaning he attaches to the result.

The real value of the method lies there; and the process of collecting the material bears the same relation to the task of teaching the student to think clearly as a visit to a precinct station to an explanation of the police-power. And if any considerable time is spent on the task there is loss we can ill afford of the opportunity we have to make the student see the great problems we confront and give him awareness of how great men, ancient or modern, have sought to solve them. I still dare to believe that an undergraduate who had glimpsed the reason why the mind of man still echoes the thought Plato uttered two thousand years ago would be fitter for the task of research than one who had coöperated in a house-to-house

inquiry into non-voting in Keokuk and assisted in tabulating the results.

The truth is that we are in danger of becoming over-interested in the collection of material for its own sake and under-interested in the problem of the philosophy the material implies. We are getting absorbed in method, to the exclusion of an anxiety about the results our methods attain. That is being reflected in the teaching-work in social science to an amazing degree. It is shown in the innumerable conferences held and books published thereon. It is demonstrated by the increasing number of vast treatises in which the text is drowned in a terrifying apparatus of notes and bibliographies and excursuses and appendices through which the reader bores his way with a sense that neither he nor the author has seen the wood for the trees. It is seen in the passion for the *inédit* however insignificant; and in the yearning to publish something somewhere at all costs. We have got to remember that one takes a journey for the sake of the destination. The end of social science is the better understanding of the world; and that will come not from the mere multiplication of men able to collect more facts, but from the increase of those who know, first, what facts need

to be collected, and, second, what value those facts have when assembled.

IV

Nor is it easy to be satisfied with the position of the foundations themselves. Here, let me say at once that some of them are blessed indeed in their personnel; when one thinks of a man like Abraham Flexner, with his insight, his wisdom, his humility, one wonders why, long ago, one of the great universities had not implored him to lend it the aid, as its president, of his creative imagination. But a man like Abraham Flexner is rare indeed among the executives of a foundation. Usually the director gives the impression of considerable complacency and a keen sense of the power at his disposal. He has not often himself engaged in the serious business of research. He has dipped into an immense number of subjects; he is usually captivated by the latest fashion in each. He travels luxuriously, is amply entertained wherever he goes (he has so much to give), and he speaks always to hearers keenly alert to sense the direction of his own interests in order that they may explain that this is the one thing they are anxious to develop

in their own university. When you see him at a college, it is like nothing so much as the vision of an important customer in a department store. Deferential salesmen surround him on every hand, anticipating his every wish, alive to the importance of his good opinion, fearful lest he be dissatisfied and go to their rival across the way. The effect on him is to make him feel that he in fact is shaping the future of the social sciences. Only a very big man can do that. From which it follows that he is a very big man.

He has no desire—let it be admitted in the fullest possible degree—to control the universities he seeks to benefit. The gifts are made; and it is, I believe, only in the most exceptional instances that any conditions of any kind are attached to them. But, with all the good will in the world, he cannot help controlling them. A university principal who wants his institution to expand has no alternative except to see it expand in the directions of which one or other of the foundations happens to approve. There may be doubt, or even dissent among the teachers in the institution, but what possible chance has doubt or dissent against a possible gift of, say, a hundred thousand dollars? And how, conceivably, can the teacher whose work fits

in with the scheme of the prospective endowment fail to appear more important in the eyes of the principal or his trustees than the teacher for whose subject, or whose views, the foundation has neither interest nor liking? What possible chance has the teacher of an "unendowed" subject to pull an equal weight in his institution with the teacher of one that is "endowed"? How can he avoid the embarrassment that may come when he is asked, as he has been asked, to put his own work on one side and coöperate in the particular piece of research the foundation has adopted and upon the report about which the standing of his own institution may depend? What are his chances of promotion if he pursues a path of solitary inquiry in a world of colleges competing for the substantial crumbs which fall from the foundation's table? And, observe, there is not a single point here in which there is the slightest control from, or interference by, the foundation itself. It is merely the fact that a fund is within reach which permeates everything and alters everything. The college develops along the lines the foundation approves. The dependence is merely implicit, but it is in fact quite final. If a foundation is interested in international affairs the college will develop a zeal for its

study, or for anthropology, or the negro problem, or questions of population. But it would also, whatever the cost, develop a passion for ballistics or the Bantu languages if these were the subjects upon which the foundation was prepared to smile.

I remember vividly a summer school in a European city which was visited by the director of an important foundation. Its organizers were hard pressed for funds and hopeful that some manna might fall from the particular heaven in which this director dwelt. I was invited to meet him at dinner, and instructions were offered to me about the kind of reception he was to have. Though none of us felt that what he has written possessed any special importance, we were to treat him as a high authority upon his subject. We were to elicit his frank views about the school, and explain that his hopes and fears coincided with our own. We were to discuss—of course in an impersonal way—the great achievements to the credit of his foundation, and the high influence it had exerted in the promotion of international good will. We were to refer delicately to our sense of the fitness of things which had led a foreign government to decorate him for his services. We were to indicate our faint hope that the light of his countenance might be

pleased to shine upon so humble an effort as the summer school. In so delicately perfumed an atmosphere it was indeed comforting to watch the expansion of his personality. I think we almost convinced him that he was a great man; certainly he was pleased to indicate that he believed a distinguished future lay before "some of your group." And in due time the school made its formal application, and the appropriate manna fell from heaven.

As a rule, of course, the environment, on both sides, is manipulated with a finesse more exquisitely molded and more subtly staged. But that it is recognized where the real control lies no one who has watched the operation in process can possibly doubt. The man who pays the piper knows perfectly well that he can call the tune. He can shut down, at a moment's notice, one of the most promising graduate schools in the United States by the simple process of deciding to spend its wonted subsidy in another direction. He can close an activity for which his foundation was famous all over the world, to which, also, men of international reputation have given years of devoted service, merely by deciding that there is not room for its activities in his next year's budget; and the

unfortunate subjects of his decision are without opportunity either of appeal or protest. Those who have access to him among the universities become important merely by the influence they exert. Let him select a scholar to travel among the colleges and report upon the teaching and organization of a particular subject, and the scholar will be received with the same breathless reverence as a Jacobin representative on mission. The foundations do not control, simply because, in the direct and simple sense of the word, there is no need for them to do so. They have only to indicate the immediate direction of their minds for the whole university world to discover that it always meant to gravitate swiftly to that angle of the intellectual compass.

V

No one, I suppose, has ever undertaken research, however humble, without feeling that the business of discovering facts is grim and necessary and infinitely laborious. But it is one thing to find them for the purpose of an end beyond themselves, and it is another thing, and a dangerous thing, to elevate the mere process of their discovery into a re-

ligious rhapsody. For immediately the second road is followed, a body of vital consequences follows. Immense sums of money become necessary; and the essential factor in the situation becomes the man or the institution with money to give. The laborers in the vineyard set themselves to cultivate his good will. And because scientific "impartiality" is important—for the donors must not be accused of subsidizing a particular point of view—the emphasis of research moves away from values and ends to materials and methods.

The men who used to be architects of ideas and systems become builders' laborers. They are rated not for what they think and its value, but for how they can organize and its extent. The man who dominates the field is the man who knows how to "run" committees and conferences, who has influence with, and access to, a trustee here and a director there. The governing bodies of universities are naturally impressed by imposing buildings, long lists of publications, reports of committees with high-sounding names; how, for them, shall such activities not be important upon which foundations born of the grim, material success they understand, are prepared to lavish millions? The directors are content enough, for their

esteem is flattered and they have the assurance of innumerable committees that, one day, results of the first importance will be born. And if somewhere a faint doubt obtrudes, a reference to the technic of the natural sciences and the immense results secured there is usually sufficient to stifle skepticism.

Yet if we look at the history of scientific research, the great discoveries do not, somehow, seem to have come in this way. They have been rather a matter of some lonely thinker brooding in solitude upon the meaning of facts from the significance of which he cannot escape. He gets a sudden moment of illumination, and he proceeds to test the hypothesis by finding whether it will fit the facts at his disposal. So, at least, inspiration seems to have come to Newton, to Darwin, to Clerk-Maxwell, to Einstein. And, in the vast majority of cases, the material which has given birth to the great idea, the apparatus of experiment that has proved its value have been simple alike in conception and execution.

So, too, in the social sciences. The great inventive minds, Plato, Hobbes, Rousseau, Hegel, Bentham, do not seem to have been natural members of committees. They found their ideas in a body

of factual experience which impressed them so overwhelmingly that they could not avoid the effort to discover its meaning. One could, I imagine, have helped Adam Smith a little with books and references. One can help today a great mediævalist like Haskins by copying out the charter he wants, or a great jurist like Mr. Justice Holmes by finding the references to the cases he requires. No one suffers from discussion with his fellows. The partnerships of Maitland and Sir Frederick Pollock, of Bertrand Russell and Professor Whitehead receive no emphasis now from anyone's eulogies.

Where coöperative research means these things, or others kindred to them; where, as Maitland once said, it may lead the great man, when he comes along, to fling us a footnote of gratitude for having saved his eyes and his time, I protest its value as eagerly as any. But, in its newer forms, it seems to me to raise hopes unlikely of fulfillment. It is an immense superstructure without due bed rock in the facts of intellectual creativeness. We are in danger of paying a price for its erection that we are ill able to afford.

A PORTRAIT OF JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU

If the world was amazed at the appearance of Rousseau, it has not ceased to wonder at him since his death. Few men have ever aroused emotions more vivid or more various. He has been regarded as the philosopher who, since Plato, has seen most deeply into the nature of the state; and his politics have been condemned for their lack of clarity in form and logic in substance. To some, he has seemed to penetrate more clearly the nature of faith than any of its more orthodox defenders; while other critics attack him as the main author of a reaction against the authority of dogma more profound than any since the Reformation. He has been praised as the chief element in the flowering of Romanticism, the man who above all others, made possible the recognition of emotions and sensibilities which are part of the ultimate richness of human nature. Yet this has been as ardently condemned as the parent of an impossible anarchy which robs the intellectual realm of order and of harmony.

No man, certainly, has exercised so wide an empire in fields so disparate. Religion, politics, æsthetics, fiction, education, upon each of these he has left an unmistakable impress. If, in them all, he was something of a magnificent sciolist, in all, quite as certainly, he showed that swift power of immediate penetration which is of the essence of genius. There are not half a dozen men in the history of the modern world who have so ultimately affected the ways of its mind.

Great effort, of course, has been expended upon the discovery of those thinkers to whom he is most in debt. It is sometimes even argued that he lacked originality, and Plato and Hobbes, Locke and Montesquieu, Montaigne and Diderot, are instanced as men from whom he had drunk deeply. It is true that Rousseau was far more widely read than he liked it to be supposed; and the notebooks which remain testify a little pathetically to the care with which he read. He had, moreover, in a supreme degree that gift for taking immediate seisin of a great man's thoughts which, as with Descartes, Hobbes, and Shelley, so often has momentous consequence. But the ultimate originality of Rousseau is beyond all dispute. He was shaped by his life, not by what he read. Books merely revealed to him the already half-conscious

direction of his thoughts. His real genius lay in his capacity for looking inward and reporting, with unsurpassed eloquence, how the world impinged upon his personality. What life does to a temperament more uniquely capable of self-expression than any other in the records of man—this it was his art to depict with a completeness that altered the power of self-revelation among others. Where the art of his predecessors lay in its ability to conceal or to omit, Rousseau's genius lay in his capacity to reveal and to announce. His work thus becomes a kind of autobiography externalized into a program. So that while the influences of other men upon him are important, they are negligible beside the influence of Rousseau himself. For him, the true events of his life were his own emotions; these he had cherished and analyzed and dissected as a botanist the flowers in his garden. What, therefore, others brought to him of suggestion is as nothing compared with his power to transmute what they brought. There is, in fact, no other writer whose originality can so little be brought into question.

To grasp what he taught, we must understand what he was, and that in its historic context. He came to a Paris in which social life had attained

a degree of art more perfectly proportioned than in any previous period. Its angularities had been softened, its differences harmonized, with a skill of which the secret has still an exquisite enchantment. The elegant minuet of the salon, its delicate refinement, its grace, its charm, its blending of diverse chords to harmony, these encountered a man less capable of adaptation to their nuances than any other it is possible to conceive. He was infinitely ambitious, infinitely sensitive, and infinitely proud. But his power was in a realm where external success in the life of Paris was obviously beyond him. He could not, like Diderot, dominate the company he adorned; he was tongue-tied, aloof, embarrassed. He had no capacity, like Marmontel, for meeting what sneers or contradictions he might encounter as essential elements in the art of life. He could not brook the superiority of his patrons, or meet it with the mordant irony of Fontenelle or Voltaire. When his critics pricked him he bled; and a nature given, in any case, to the passion for isolation grew ever less capable of social intercourse. Nor was the tenderness which could be evoked to tears by a sunset or a note of music, likely to find happi-

ness in a society which he had not yet taught to make of its emotions the master of its intelligence.

He came to this society, moreover, a foreigner and a plebeian. Both of these elements are vital to the grasp of Rousseau. He was as inherently and permanently a citizen of Geneva, as Sophocles a citizen of Athens or Dante a Florentine. He never lost his pride in his birth there, nor the peculiar flavor of its Puritan temper. There was ever present in him a Calvin who measured and condemned the skeptic and pleasure-loving city he yearned to conquer. From the outset of his sojourn in Paris he was a stranger to its essence. The Puritan moralist had an Athanasius in him which drove him, as in the letter to D'Alembert, to judge and to deny. If he had lost the formalism of Calvinist dogma, he retained its substance; and there was in him always a self which never lost the craving for simplicity and clung to it the more, the more the complexity of Paris drove him in upon himself. If, as with Diderot, he had possessed the chameleon-like quality which would have enabled him to fit whatever environment he encountered, the whole ethos of his life would have been different. But, though he did not know it in those early years of passionate creation when Diderot

and Voltaire seemed to him God-like beings made for emulation, he had brought Geneva with him to Paris. Its spiritualism was in conflict with the materialism of the philosophers; its sense of the omnipresence of God was in conflict with the ardent skepticism of the Encyclopedists. It was Geneva which triumphed; and his very pride and sensitiveness only made its victory more complete.

For Rousseau was also plebeian; the depth of his pride was only intensified by the consciousness of the difference this made between himself and his environment. There is hardly a line in Voltaire which suggests even a dim capacity to grasp the mind of the peasant or the urban proletariat. His sophistication, his culture, his pleasure in the refinements at the command of a man of the world, made him revolt from those who, by definition, lacked these things. For him, accordingly, the workers are the canaille, doomed to superstition and necessarily subordinate because the work of the world requires a multitude of servants to wait upon free-minded masters. Diderot, indeed, understood the people and sympathized, by the intense imaginative insight with which he was endowed, with their half-articulate wants; but Diderot, like

almost all the intellectuals of the eighteenth century, was essentially *déclassé*, and his heart was anywhere that argument was afoot.

Rousseau was in a different category. He never lost the sense of anger against an order the tradition of which forced him at every step to fight for himself. He felt the burden of the whole proletariat upon his shoulders. He had the proud indignation of the man who feels that he embodies and voices the suffering of the world. He felt that a kindness offered him was either the prelude to insult or the forerunner of control. He lived every day of his life in that mood of Dr. Johnson when he waited in the ante-room of Chesterfield. He resented alike what was offered and what was denied. He disliked the suspicion that his time was at the disposal of the aristocracy, who could deny him entrance as they pleased. He rejected all the principles upon which his own advancement depended. His insistence, for instance, upon earning his living as a copyist was essentially a challenge to those who, as he instinctively felt, regarded him as a mountebank of genius to be cultivated as the ornament of their *salon*. On any terms in which he could suspect such patronage, for him an alliance with the fashionable world was impossible.

To him, the proletarian, that milieu of grace with its easy mockery and ironic wit, left a dumb sense of barbarous crudity, which was as poignant an experience as so sensitive a mind could know. He believed in the goodness of the poor; and the world about him regarded them as a canaille his genius permitted him to desert. He claimed rights, and he was offered privilege; he demanded equality and he was offered alternative patrons. So that he was driven by the law of his being to deny the foundations of the world he had hoped to conquer. He saw between himself and its spirit a fundamental contradiction of principle which neither compromise nor recognition could bridge.

This perception two other things intensified. No portrait of Rousseau would be adequate which failed to take account of the degree to which his perceptiveness was disorganized by the malady from which he suffered. His letters, his *Dialogues* written in the last years, the sense of a whole world in conspiracy against him, the belief that humanity has become, as it were, a gigantic gaoler, all these make it clear that the insight he had was too feverish and too passionate to be capable of the philosopher's perspective. And that insight is, in any case, less the insight of ordered and coherent

logic than of a lyrical intuition to which is suddenly revealed a secret incapable of systematic statement. He himself has told us that reflection was a painful thing to him, and, as he believed, unnatural to mankind. The truths he saw were not worked out by a patient analysis of experience, but caught suddenly as a landscape breaks upon us when we have breasted the summit of a mountain. And they came to him with an emotional penumbra which gave them the force of a mystic faith incapable of brooking denial. Whatever, therefore, he saw, he had, like Blake, to pronounce with the majestic oratory of organ music, which depends upon sweeping us out of ourselves for the conviction it can bring. Things go to Rousseau's heart before they penetrate his mind; they are absorbed before they are analyzed. The reasons, therefore, that he reveals are always, as with the tortured soul of Pascal, those of which Reason itself is unaware. They are affirmations of the central verities of one richly lived life, irrelevant to any experience which is not in communion with them. But for those who, like Rousseau, find in them the quintessence of life's meaning, all else, whatever its logic, seems in turn puny and irrelevant. They are the outpourings of revelation, not

the reasoning of philosophy, the vision of the poet, not the logic of the scientist. Their unity, therefore, is poetic in character, and it is the poet's temperament that is the core of their being.

So that the essence of Rousseau is, above all, an affirmation of himself. He could be happy, and he is miserable; he could be good, and life has made him evil; he could be free, and he is the prisoner of life. And because each of these prospects should be open to him, that is what nature intended, what accordingly, society, civilization, institutions deny. These are the cause of his degradation, and the root of their wrong is in the inequalities they ordain. For these mean pain for the many, and pleasure for the few. They make the masses the slaves of a handful of oppressors. They give the gains of life to a few who do not labor, and its toil to the many who never know its gains. The whole problem of evil is thus the outcome of the central antithesis of rich and poor. This it is which, once we have left nature for civilization, ordains disharmony by its provocation of inequalities. And the more intense the civilization, the deeper must the disharmony become. The creations of intelligence, the work of the arts and sciences, are accessible only to the few; they are

appreciable only for those who have the leisure to enjoy, and the means to acquire them. So the riches of civilization are a means of degrading the mass of men. The wealthy are ever more privileged, ever more separated by their privileges from their fellows. The principle of our life is clearly wrong if what makes for the happiness of the few thus separates the many from its attainment. We seem to hear the plea of Marx set out in ethical terms.

This, in fact, is Rousseau's central theme. Nature has made man for freedom, and the device of inequality has fastened him in chains; it is no accident that the first sentence of the *Social Contract* should be the final exhortation of the "Communist Manifesto." We have therefore to abolish inequality. This does not mean a return to the pre-civil state. Rousseau believed with passion in progress; "human nature," he wrote, "does not retrogress," and there are benefits in civil society infinitely greater than the primitive condition of mankind can afford. But to secure those advantages, we must give to nature room that she may find play for the impulses of man. We must make over the elements in society which deny the good in those impulses. A restoration is required which

shall at once refashion the individual and the institutions which today degrade him.

The three great books of Rousseau are all constructive essays upon this theme. The *Emile* is, above all, an effort to discover how the individual may be remade. It seeks to find a form of education in which the impulses of nature may take hold of the child before the influence of civilization destroys the goodness they confer. Nature makes us solitary, and the child is withdrawn from society. Nature feeds our instincts and reason is to be secondary to their satisfaction. Men learn by their needs, and not by books; and literature is to be withheld until the character is strong enough to resist the influence of a drug so potent. So, too, with religious experience. The child may know God since in nature the savage sees the power of a Supreme Being; but he must know neither ritual nor dogma since these are social creations and the nurse only of corruption. So that when Emile enters the world, he is safeguarded by character against its vices. He may be what the *Nouvelle Héloïse* seeks to argue we may make of ourselves if we do but follow nature. For it is the thesis of Rousseau that Julie frees herself from the dangers that surround her by a return to nature. She reës-

tablishes the family, "the first model of a political society." In a life sweetened by the duty and affection which arise from a natural relationship, she can repel the danger of an adultery upon which society does not frown. In the life thus opened before her, her duty and her faith in God give her the chance to realize herself without the stain of hypocrisy and illusion that civilized life involves.

But this is not enough. It opens a way of escape for the few; it remakes the few fortunate to whom the privileges of inequality give avenues to freedom. It still leaves the many in the corruption of the present society. Here, it may be argued, we may see the purpose of that *Social Contract* which, it must never be forgotten, is but a fragment of a larger work. Even in its incomplete form, it is difficult not to regard it as the essential complement of the *Emile* and the *Nouvelle Héloïse*. It is a body of principles out of which, if applied, might grow the ideal society. It is a technique for restoring equality to civilization and thus making possible a civil life in which its virtues without its vices may be realized. Let men renounce their unequal freedoms, which, today, mean the servitude of the many. Let them constitute of themselves a common will in which all equally

participate. Let all be subject to that common will in equal degree. Then all equally will be free since what is ordained will be imposed freely and equally upon all. The sovereign of the society will not be one or a few, but the whole, seeking in its acts to realize the common good. The magistrate will not be a master but a servant. Political organization will no longer repress, but, by the law it applies, will liberate; for what it applies will be the law each freely imposes upon himself. And as the last and vital sanction of this new construction, there is the civil religion. God is the *deus ex machina* invoked to keep man faithful to the principles he has thus asserted. Without Him, all would be valueless; with Him, the will and promise of men is strengthened and sanctified. For it is God who made nature beneficent, and to invoke His aid is to give to man the power to maintain that pledge of self-sacrifice which is the condition of his freedom. The Savoyard Vicar is emancipated because he has confided himself to the ultimate magistracy of God.

If the edifice of principle which Rousseau affirmed is regarded in this light, the *Confessions* becomes not only intelligible, but also the cornerstone of the edifice. For it is then possible to admit

that it is time and again erroneous and malign, and yet to see in it a body of essential truth without which the real bearing of Rousseau is necessarily lost. The *Confessions* becomes a self-portrait of one who, as he believed, was fashioned by nature for good, and turned to evil ways by social institutions. It is a vindication, not only of himself, but of his doctrines. It is an argument that he might have been happy had the original endowment of his character been given opportunity for social expression. But the society he did in fact encounter is one of competing wills striving fiercely with one another and succeeding only at each other's cost. It is the record of the defeat of one who sought happiness and asked but little for the constitution of that happiness. He was born free, and the chains had been fastened upon him. He had asked only to see the sunlight on Mont Blanc, to wander with Madame d'Houdetot in the woods, as Julie and Saint-Preux had wandered. The social system of Rousseau, in a word, is simply an effort to make explicit what he believed to be the whole import of his tortured wanderings.

It would not be difficult to formulate a requisitory against this corpus of doctrine the answer to which the defenders of Rousseau have thus far

failed to make. The implications of the *Emile* alone show how little relation it has to the facts of life. We are to suppose a child without parents, rich so that every requirement of the system may be satisfied, upon whom neither heredity nor temperament has left a trace; and he is in the hands of a tutor for whom his education is not a means but an end. Or, as in the *Social Contract*, we are to assume a power of all exercised without tyranny, upon terms the administrative character of which is never even stated. We have a picture of the working of man's mind in society which omits at least the half of what is significant, and denatures the rest. We have a religious tyranny in which the new presbyter is not merely written larger than the ancient priest, but has exactly those weapons at his disposal against the use of which most of modern history is a protest. The *Nouvelle Héloïse* is an idyl which, even after a century and three-quarters, retains almost all its original grace; yet its essence is the creation of a world within a world into which the major problems of actual life do not enter. Julie solves her problems only by assuming that outside her household there is the void which existed upon the first day of creation.

Yet, important as it is to understand the essential inadequacies of Rousseau, it is still more important to see what he did. Above all, we have to guard against the dismissal of his theories because they remain incapable of realization. This, at least, none knew better, or stated more clearly, than Rousseau himself; and none would have been more anxious to affirm that they offer less a possible, immediately achievable society than a criterion by which to expose and, it may be, to modify the evils of the present. And, certainly, much of the basis of his construction is neither utopian nor sophistical. There is nothing incredible in making socialism the outcome of individualism; that, in a broad sense, is happening before our eyes. There is nothing educationally reprehensible in making original virtue, instead of original sin, the foundation of training in childhood. There is no ultimate psychological error in making Julie undergo a moral crisis in which her whole being is reborn; no one familiar with the history of religious conversion will be inclined to deny either the truth of the evolution that Rousseau records, or the immense social significance of its ultimate outcome. And, if we omit the supernatural element, there will not be many anxious to deny that a social phi-

losophy must make the impact of intense religious faith if it is to maintain any permament hold upon the minds of men.

It is more fruitful to discuss the character of Rousseau's influence, and to inquire, as best we may, why it was so extensive. Here, it may be argued, the essential influence of Rousseau was fourfold. He was, above all, the author of a vast religious revival of which, even yet, we are far from the end. Its profit, maybe, was to creeds he did not share, since the effort to found a civil faith was obviously premature. But by opposing the certainty of non-rational conviction to a world puzzled and tormented by a generation of rational abstraction and argument, he carried the incomplete work of Pascal to its inevitable conclusion. He gave to the will to believe rights of which the Encyclopedists had seemed to deprive it; and men like Chateaubriand and Lamennais reaped for Catholicism the harvest he had sown.

He revived, in the second place, the ethical foundations of his period. He gave to the simple virtues a self-respect which the manners of a decaying society had taken away. He made the sanctity of marriage, the beauty of family life, the duty of so living that a man might be at peace with

himself, seem important as they had not seemed for more than a generation. He made it an honorable thing for mothers to nurse their children; and it became possible to deny that it was necessary to commit adultery in order to be a man of the world. He reformed, too, the educational habits of his period, and he made men see that the future of humanity depends upon giving to the educational system a primary place in the national economy. He impressed upon society the folly of a discipline which neglects the correlation of body and mind; and he reduced the training of intelligence to its proper proportions as a lever of civic virtue. And if it is claimed that in this realm what he accomplished was but a magistral commingling of what Plato and Locke and Condillac had already said, Rousseau's is the final answer that to impose important truth upon mankind is not less important than to discover it.

In the political field, his influence is far more complicated, and, therefore, much less easy to define. For there was a Rousseau whose political influence was in the direction of an extreme individualism, as there was a Rousseau whose work produced a collectivism of a certainty not less extreme. In a sense, the latter aspect has been the

more enduring. It was born of that passion to discover a unity in society which, in the Western World, goes back to the very origins of political thought. It reduces the individual to an instrument of a greater whole whose end has to seek realization as the larger whole realizes itself. That vision has had consequences in two directions. On the one hand, as with Hegel, it became the parent of an intensely conservative doctrine, of which Rousseau himself would have denied almost every principle; on the other, as it was inherited by Marx, it regained its revolutionary purposes and became again a weapon against the inequality he abhorred. The relation between Rousseau and Marx has been too little investigated, though the analogies of doctrine are obvious and striking. What, in this aspect, is especially notable is the exaltation of the state by each that, in a supreme and prolonged effort of will, inequality may perish; with the inference that with its disappearance a mild and natural anarchism may well become the settled form of social organization. But with both Hegel and Marx, as with their disciples, Rousseauism has essentially meant the sacrifice of the individual to an end beyond himself. With both, of course, it is proclaimed that the individ-

ual is the richer for his self-abnegation, that he realizes thereby an end which, more fully than otherwise might be, achieves the personality he possesses. But with each, it is difficult not to feel that the problem of freedom has been wrongly conceived, its methodology, accordingly, stated in terms that lack relation to the essence of what freedom involves.

The individualism of Rousseau is related, above all, to the lyrical character of his temperament. Rousseau, of course, did not originate the Romantic spirit; the success of La Chaussée and the theorizing of Dubois and Levesque show clearly that its time had come. But Rousseau gave it its letters of credit, and his own triumph assured its victory. What essentially his individualism did was to erect his personal experience into an argument and insist that this was valid against the historic tradition of mankind. He exalted, moreover, this experience until, for him and for his readers, it had the impelling claim of religious ecstasy. His impressions are true because they are passionately perceived. They can reject older and more somber disciplines because they are so intimate a part of himself. On this side, at least, Rousseau is the eternal revolutionary, whose emotions are his con-

science and whose conscience will not brook denial whatever the challenge it may encounter. It is subjectivism *in excelsis*—the feeling not only that the sensation of the moment is the whole of reality, but the intimate conviction that the sensation makes the reality and that, without it, reality itself would be meaningless.

Much could be said of the æsthetic consequence of the way in which Rousseau's personal life colored the substance of his Romanticism; not for nothing had he wandered amid the lakes and mountains of Geneva and Italy. But it is here more profitable to think of the passionate color he lavished on things which, before he idealized them, had seemed of little import to his contemporaries. The intimate details of a simple country life, the cows in the field, the peasants returning home at the end of a day—it is always the homeliest and the tenderest of virtues that he seems to reserve for the most passionate poetic form. He was, of course, not the first to realize how profoundly they belonged to art; the brush of van Ostade had idealized them in a thousand different forms. But it was as though the vision of van Ostade had suddenly burgeoned into the colorful brilliance of a Titian so that no man could forget their clamant

ecstasy. It is not merely that nature becomes a part of art; it is, also, and emphatically, that nature in its simplest form becomes a claim on the soul of man; and whatever is a part of nature has, accordingly, a claim on him, too. The individualism of Rousseau is, in a subtle way, an expression of that plebeian temper which he forced upon the notice of his generation. He invests with new dignity and new claims things that, before, men had hardly realized as compatible with either claims or dignity. His eloquence invests the grimness of rude plebeian effort with a splendor men had never before seen. La Bruyère, Voltaire, above all, Diderot, had cried out against brutalization of the people. But Rousseau asserted not his difference from them but his kinship with them. He claimed for them their inheritance. He gave them thereby a new meaning for their lives. For he put into words what they had dumbly felt. Thereby he became the prophet of their future.

That there is in Rousseau a trumpet-call to revolutionary acts, a hundred events can be cited to testify. Yet to regard him only in that context would be to falsify the man he was. As his life seems a permanent conflict between precept and practice, so there is a singular and ultimate dis-

harmony between what he experienced and what he was prepared to urge. The first "Discourse" is a resounding attack upon the arts and sciences; the second preaches with passion the case for egalitarian anarchy. Yet the conclusion of the first seems the establishment of academies, and, if the second has any conclusion, it is the need for submission to the will of God from whom all governments derive their authority. So, also, with the *Nouvelle Héloïse*. Never has the glory of passion been more flamingly proclaimed; never has revelation been so earnestly destroyed as in the Savoyard Vicar's profession of faith. But Julie submits to the claim of the marriage tie, and the Vicar's disciple is bidden to worship in the church of his fathers. In the more purely political texts, the temper is similar. The sovereignty of the people is proclaimed in the *Social Contract*; in the *Letters from the Mountain* civil war appears the necessary outcome of popular right. But, in the one, all governments are given a just authority, and, in the other, compromise is recommended to the people of Genèva. So, also, when he was asked for advice from Poland and from Corsica. He trembles before the need for action, and his counsels are a warning against the perils of change. To

the Calas case, he has nothing to say save that time heals all things and that resignation is a virtue. To his myriad correspondents who seek to frame their lives by his principles, he is timid and hesitant and evasive; it is as though he sought to deny in life all the principles he drew from experience. There is nothing in him of the man of action, no gift of any kind for measuring the deed to the need.

The antinomy is a real one, and it is, doubtless, no small part of the seeming contradiction that his critics have seen in his work. Yet, also, it is important to remember that in so vast an edifice consistency cannot be looked for; that, in any case, the life of Rousseau is in the glimpses of truth he caught and fearlessly recorded rather than in his effort to act the part of statesman. What, after all, remains important is the fact that he was a prophet to his generation. It was, as his contemporaries well understood, a gospel that he taught; and wherever men experience the needs he experienced, to them, also, he is an evangel. It is not that he originated in any special field. It is not that he discovered in the field of social constitution laws that we can compare with similar hypotheses in the natural sciences. His contribution is a different one. It is

that he gave new power and enhanced prestige to all he proclaimed as truth, that whatever passed through the crucible of his heart, emerged re-fashioned and re-created as a living and ardent thing. That is the point of Madame de Staël's famous saying. *"Il n'a rien découvert,"* she wrote, *"mais il a tout enflammé."* And to know what that fire meant, we have to try to catch the sudden vision of new horizons which, for the young Marie Phlipon, made all of life seem different. We have to envisage the young Marat on his chair in the Paris garden reading out the *Social Contract* to humble men who hear in its music the song that is in their hearts. We have to think of the young Swiss pastor, Roustan, who can write to him that his teaching is a precious commentary on the Beatitudes, or of the young girl who begs from him the secret of a peaceful heart. Whatever his wrongs, his errors, his hesitations, the man to whom a whole epoch turned for help and comfort, was a very great man.

The greater because he was infinitely unhappy, and yet did not, in his misery, cease to proclaim a message which gave new hope and made possible new dreams. Nor must we forget his genius for

sincerity. If we know the sins he committed, it is because he did not strive to conceal them, and he admitted frankly his shame. It is we, indeed, who benefit from that shame and suffering. Had he stayed in Geneva, or rested with Madame de Warens, instead of coming to Paris, he might have remained the happy wanderer, to whom the height of enchantment was plucking cherries in an autumn garden. But he came to Paris; and he was not afraid to challenge there a group of men who dominated the intellectual life of their country as it had never before been dominated. From that challenge, in no small part, there came the experiences from which his most bitter moments and ultimate disease arose. Yet he did not fear either to issue the challenge or to maintain his ground. There was courage in that.

For the men he confronted were the corporate mind of Europe in his time. Voltaire, Holbach, Grimm, Diderot, D'Alembert, Helvétius, they are, after all, a formidable company. We can still catch the fascination of their talk, its sense of power, its keen pleasure in the art of making life gracious, its zest for knowledge, its refusal any longer to be duped by the superstition of the past, the wealth

it commanded, the great personages devoted to its wants. They were a brotherhood of immense influence, devoted to a great task which was, at least in part, his own. Nothing would have been easier, as his first years in Paris make clear, than to have been admitted to the freedom of their fellowship. But their message was not Rousseau's. Theirs was the mind which denies, his was the heart which affirms. Theirs was to bound by reason an empire which sought to overpass its frontiers; his was the effort to remake its boundaries to a plan in which the sovereignty of reason had only a part to play. So, in the face of criticism and envy and hate, he took once more to the road. And whatever allowance we make against him for pride and self-pity and misinterpretation, the courage of the choice is undeniable. It was to court disaster from the only men who could have understood, and might have defended, the plea he was driven to utter. It was to choose isolation instead of friendship, persecution instead of alliance.

We have to remember that ours is the fruit of his decision. What he experienced in sorrow, we have inherited in knowledge; what he in his personal happiness lost, we in our collective tradition have gained. For him it was a tragedy the bitter-

ness of which his utmost eloquence could hardly express. But for us it invokes the memory less of its sadder moments than of those magic hours where we seem to share the hope of his enchanted dream.

A PLEA FOR EQUALITY

At no period since the French Revolution has there been a skepticism of democracy so profound as at the present time. Its unquestioned supremacy as an ideal has gone, and there are few now so poor as to do it reverence. Some speak with contempt of the bourgeois notions it embodies; others insist upon its futile inefficiency; to others, again, democracy has broken upon the impregnable rock of scientific analysis. It is based, we are told, upon the exploded myth of equality. It is the unnatural offspring of Romanticism, the fruit of a dubious marriage between Envy and Rousseau. Its principles, it is insisted, do not survive examination. Liberty is meaningless save in the terms of law; and law demands authority and subordination as the conditions of its life. Equality, could it be realized, would merely level the claims of the best to the plane of mediocrity; and it would compel the able and the energetic to fit a Procrustes' bed of identity for which nature did not create them. Fraternity, moreover, is simple folly in a world

where ruthless struggle is the law of life; we cannot love our fellow-men until we have won security, and in the uneasy pyramid of society there is no security save as we trample upon our neighbors. All over the world the institutional system which, to the nineteenth century was the pattern laid up in heaven for emulation, has been challenged; and there is no way to gain a reputation so easily as by insisting that the age of enthusiasm for democratic institutions is now drawing to its close.

Yet a shrewd observer would be a little skeptical of this temper. The democratic movement is not an historic accident. It arose from intelligible causes, and it is still referable to intelligible principle. It arose as a protest against the possession of privilege by men whose supremacy was not found to be intimately connected with the well-being of society. Men discovered at long last that exclusion from privilege is exclusion from benefit. They learned that if, over any considerable period, they are governed by a section of themselves, it is in the interest of that section that they will be governed. Grim experience taught them that power is poisonous to its possessors; that no dynasty and no class can exclusively control the

engines of power without ultimately confusing their private interest with the public well-being. They learned that interest elevates prejudice to the level of principle, and that reason is then used, not to satisfy objective need, but to justify postponement of desirable change. They found, in a word, that if popular well-being is to be the purpose of government, popular control is the essential condition of its fulfilment.

Almost a century and a half has passed since 1789, and we can begin to assess the results of that gigantic upheaval. Broadly, it may be said to have brought the middle-class business man to power; and its chief consequence has been the abolition of that political privilege which was the chief obstacle to his ascent. In the Western world, at least, men can now enjoy the major political freedoms. There is universal suffrage; there is a relatively wide liberty of speech and association; there is opportunity for the humble to elevate themselves to a part in the governance of the state. The old view of government as the natural field of an hereditary aristocracy has been definitely relegated to the museum of historic antiquities; and it is certainly difficult not to feel that the scale of life to-day is for the average man ampler than at any

previous time. Given political-mindedness, he can hope to play his little part upon the national stage. Given the sense of organization, and any will widely representative of popular desire can expect to find its place, after due effort, in the statute-book. The political state is a democratic state in the important sense that it is no longer built upon a system of deliberate exclusions.

But if the political state is democratic, it cannot be said that we are members of a democratic society. The outstanding fact in the political sphere is equality. Bismarck's insistence that the best form of government is a benevolent and rational absolutism no longer commands general assent because historic experience has shown that no absolutism is ever capable of continuing either benevolent or rational. Any form of government other than the democratic suffers from the fatal defect of preventing the natural expansion of the human spirit. It thwarts the progress of civilization because it belittles men. It elevates the few at the expense of the many in terms which reason cannot justify. When the monarchy governed France, when the aristocracy governed England, those who obtained the fruits of the adventure were rarely those who toiled for its enlargement.

The democratic principle had at least this major advantage that it offered a plane where the claims of men to a share in the common good could be admitted as equal. Personality as such was dignified by its recognition as citizenship. To open to ordinary men new avenues of creative effort was not merely to raise their moral stature; it enlarged also the quality of the political state by enabling it to base its experiments on a far wider induction than at any previous time. Political democracy, as Tocqueville regretfully admitted, more securely civilized the masses than has ever been the case under alternative systems.

II

But political democracy implies only political equality; and though it is not necessary to minimize the significance of political equality, neither is it necessary to magnify it. In most states of the modern world it has not been followed by equality either in the social or in the economic spheres. And since politics, after all, is relatively a small part of life, the ambit of territory within which the continuous expansion of personality is permitted, in which, that is to say, the spirit of the

individual has genuine elbow-room, remains notably small. The distribution of wealth is notoriously unequal; the distribution of educational opportunity hardly less so. The degree to which occupations in the modern world are, America apart, stereotyped from father to son is astonishing to the observer. The democratic political state has, so far, been curiously unable to alter the inequalities of the social fabric. The result everywhere is grave dissatisfaction, a sense that political institutions are less capable of themselves effecting basic social change than merely of recording in legislation changes that have been effected by revolutionary means. The nineteenth century preached the doctrine that the ballot-box was the highroad to the realization of social good. The twentieth century seems not unlikely to urge that violence is the true midwife of radical betterment. That difference in outlook—with all the dangers it implies—is born of nothing so much as our failure to apply the idea of equality outside the merely political sphere. For without equality there cannot be liberty, and without liberty there cannot be the humanization of mankind.

Without equality, I say, there cannot be liberty. All history goes to show that interdependence. For

if liberty means the continuous power of expansion in the human spirit, it is rarely present save in a society of equals. Where there are rich and poor, educated and uneducated, we find always masters and servants. To be rich is to be powerful, to be educated is to have authority. To live in subordination by reason of poverty or of ignorance is to be like a tree in the shade which perishes because it cannot reach the light. Poverty and ignorance benumb the faculties and depress the energies of men. It is, of course, true that there are those who by the very strength of the conditions which suppress them are goaded to conquest of their environment. But with ordinary men this is not the case. On the contrary, the sense of inferiority which an unequal society inflicts upon them deprives them of that hope which is the spur of effort. They remain contented with a condition in which they cannot make the best of themselves. The distance which separates them from the wealthy and the cultured is so vast that they are never stimulated to make the effort to overpass it. They remain uncivilized because power and consideration are objects too refined for their understanding. They are satisfied with the crude in art and letters, the brutal in sensual pleasures, the

material and the vulgar in objects of desire. And because of their inferiority, they are judged to be incapable of advancement. Aristocracies, whether of wealth or birth, have never understood the secret of this degradation. In part, they have accepted it as proof of their own superiority; and in part they have welcomed it as a safeguard of their security. They take the deference they are accorded as the proof of their inherent worth; and they do not examine into the causes of its reception.

Aristocracies, historically, have always suffered from an incapacity for ideas. They cannot share the wants or the instincts of the rest of the society of which they are a part. And they always fail, accordingly, to realize that the desire for equality is one of the most permanent passions in mankind. At the very birth of political science, Aristotle had already seen that a failure to satisfy it is one of the major causes of revolutions; it is not less so to-day. For where there are wide differences in the habits of men, there are wide differences in their thoughts. To think differently is to lose hold of a basis of social unity. A house divided against itself, the Bible says, cannot stand; a nation divided into rich and poor is as a house divided against itself. It is only where men have an equal interest in the

result of the common effort that there is a bond of genuine fellowship between them. A realization of unequal interest means, inevitably, the growth of a sense of injustice. That sense fastens itself upon the perception of an unequal return to effort; and an abyss is precipitated between classes of which, in the end, revolution is always the outcome.

It appears, therefore, that the less obvious the differences between men in the gain of living the greater the bond of fellowship between them. And in a society like our own the differences between men are intensified by the fact that they are rarely referable to rational principle. We have wealthy men and women who have never contributed a day's effort to the sum of productivity; and we have poor men and women who have never known relaxation from unremitting toil. Wealth, with us, is so often the result of accident, of corruption, of a power to satisfy demand not inherently social in character, that there is little relation between its possession and a criterion of social benefit. The economic inequalities of society, that is to say, do not so explain themselves that men can regard them as just. Those who support them as necessary are always on the defensive; and they

are always occupied in searching for possible concessions to the poor whereby they can be the better preserved. Philanthropy and social legislation are the taxes the rich must pay to keep the poor in order; and instead of a stimulus to cease from poverty they act as an incentive to remain in a routine where the service performed prevents by its character the emergence of a civilized quality in the performer. Our inegalitarian system corrodes the conscience of the rich by extracting ransom from them; and it destroys the creativeness of the poor by emphasizing their inferiority in the very conference of benefit. The rich hate the process of giving, and the poor hate them because they are compelled to receive.

The system, moreover, weakens from decade to decade. It weakens because in the first place it is no longer supported by the authority of religion, and, in the second, because the growth of education is increasingly destructive of the habit of deference. Where poverty was accompanied by deep religious feeling it rarely awoke envy, either because the poor man felt in duty bound to accept the will of God, or because he had an intimate assurance of a due reward in the after life. But he has no longer the sense of being selected for

salvation; and despite the development of an increasingly corybantic Christianity, he insists more and more that his heaven must be realized in the present life. It is necessary, moreover, continually to raise the standard of education, in part because an intelligent worker is a condition of our scale of productive effort, and in part because an educated democracy is a primary condition of social peace. Yet the first result of education among the masses is the perception that whatever inequalities may be justified by social needs, the present inequalities are incapable of justification. The more we educate, in short, the more we reveal to the multitude the inadequacy of the moral principle upon which our civilization is based. Since we have given political power to that multitude, either it will use the institutions of democracy to rectify the inadequacy or it will search for some other institutional principle whereby the rectification can be made.

III

"Our inequality," said Matthew Arnold, "materializes our upper class, vulgarizes our middle class, brutalizes our lower." It does this, more-

over, in proportion to the degree of inequality that exists among us. Anyone who considers the habits of our plutocracy will see how the crass stupidity of their standards is reflected in every nook and cranny of society. The fact that they govern because they are rich means that wealth is the mark of consideration. What is held out to other classes for admiration is not elevation of mind, dignity of character, or beauty of life, but position, show, luxury, or any other mark by which riches can be displayed. There is absent, that is to say, from an admiration for this plutocracy any quality that is likely to ennoble the mind. Those who feel it merely develop in themselves the zest for ostentation, crude as it is, that they admire. By maintaining inequality, in fact, we maintain the conditions which inhibit the process of civilizing men. For where those who are held up to us for emulation are those whose only qualities are either a genius for acquisition or a capacity to preserve what someone else has acquired, there cannot be growth of spiritual stature. The religion of inequality, indeed, has not even the advantage of mysticism; it is too solid, crude, brutal for that. And, like all religions void of graciousness, it fashions its acolytes in its own image.

There is, moreover, another aspect from which our religion of inequality must be regarded. One of the first considerations in any society is the need for the equal protection of the laws. What is certain in our society is that an unequal distribution of wealth means unequal protection in the Courts. The rich man can almost always secure bail; not so the poor. A fine means nothing to the rich; but it may well destroy the poor man's home, or, in default, send him to prison. The rich man has at his disposal all the resources of legal technic; the poor man, for the most part, must either take what lawyer he can get, or rely on the power of the judge to penetrate through his own stumbling inarticulateness. Nor does the difference end here. What we call embezzlement in a junior clerk becomes high finance in a millionaire. What is disorderly conduct in the East End of London becomes high spirits West of Temple Bar. What is theft in Poplar is kleptomania in Kensington. We have no conscience about the fate of Sacco and Vanzetti; but Mr. Thaw's millions enable him to escape their fate. There is, in fact, equality before the law only where there is equal wealth in the parties; and the measure of justice they will ob-

tain is very largely a function of their balance at the bank.

Or consider, from the same angle, the consequence of inequality in the sphere of education. Even where we have conquered illiteracy, education, for the overwhelming majority, ends at fourteen years of age; which means, for most, that the necessary tools of intellectual analysis are incapable of being used. Knowledge and the power to make experience articulate become the monopoly of the few. An inability in the uneducated to state their wants leads, at its lower levels, to a wantlessness which utterly degrades the human spirit. Most men and women go through life completely ignorant of the intellectual heritage of civilization. Yet, personal relations apart, no one who has been vouchsafed companionship in the investigation of that heritage but knows it as the source of the main joy life can offer. To deprive men of access to it does not destroy the impulse of curiosity; it merely deflects it into channels from which no social good can emerge. Education is the great civilizer, and it is, above all, absence of education which provokes the brute in man. The price we pay for that absence anyone can see in the slums of Manchester or the underworld of

Chicago. Above all, an inequality in this sphere is paid for by the inability of the ignorant to realize the fragility of civilization. They have a sense of angry despair or sodden disillusion; they do not know how to formulate the source either of their anger or their hopelessness. We leave them to destroy because we have not taught them how to fulfil.

There is, moreover, a psychological result of inequality upon which too much stress can hardly be laid. Inequality divides our society into men who give and men who receive orders. The second class, being deprived of initiative, is robbed of the possibility of freedom. Its members spend their lives as prisoners of an inescapable routine they have had no part in making. When their life is compared with that of their governors, whose power of self-controlled initiative is continuous and unbroken, it is obvious enough that distinctiveness of personality has there little chance of survival. And the orders received are irresponsible since, in general, they are born, not of function, but of the possession of wealth. The farm laborer, the domestic servant, the factory worker realize in a high degree that definition of an animate tool which Aristotle insisted was the quintessence of

slavery. In the psychological sphere their experience means a continuous inhibition of natural impulse, a want of room to experiment with themselves, which is disastrous to the expansion of personality. Economic equality, for them, would mean the end of government by a narrow oligarchy of wealth whose sole purpose in life is personal pleasure or personal gain. We can understand the need for obedience to a doctor, a tax-collector, a policeman. There, as we can realize, the rules they enforce are born of principles of which they, not less than we, are servants; and their relation to the result is a disinterested one. But the orders of the narrow group who own economic power are rarely disinterested and never born of principle unless they choose so to make them. The result is the loss of freedom in those whom they command because they dictate the rules of authority to ends in which their servants cannot share.

It is partly a result of this dictation that it should be incompatible also with freedom in the sphere of mind. To preserve inequality in social life, the pattern of mental experience must be controlled for the majority. The press, broadly speaking, is a servile instrument of wealthy men. Owned by

them, in a degree ever more concentrated, dependent for its profits on wealthy advertisers whom it dare not offend, it pours forth a stream of tendencious news the main purpose of which is to maintain an atmosphere favorable to the maintenance of inequality. Our governors may well adapt to themselves the aphorism of Fletcher of Saltoun and say that they care not who has the making of the nation's laws so long as they have the making of its news. It is difficult for any observer, however much he strive for impartiality, to see the facts through the clouds of bias, suggestion, and suppression with which he is confronted; and it is the deliberate purpose of those clouds to screen from view the actual workings of a system of which inequality is the basic principle to be defended.

In a less degree, yet still very notably, the same is true of the educational system. It is dangerous in school and university alike to obtain a reputation for political or economic radicalism. The authorities who control appointments are the nominees of the conquerors; and, from dismissal to loss of the chance of promotion, they have at their disposal weapons which effectively prevent any ultimate freedom of thought in their servants.

Anyone who scrutinizes the long list of investigations by the American Association of University Professors, or who analyzes the history of those teachers who have affiliated themselves to trade unions, will realize amply enough that liberty of thought in the teaching world is, at the point where the thought touches the existing disposition of social forces, broadly impossible for most. There have not, perhaps, been in England some of the more egregious outrages which have characterized American experience; but that is because there the selection has been more carefully made and dismissal, *a priori* has been less necessary. For in the theological realm the English record is not an honorable one; and even to-day, in Oxford and Cambridge, theological teaching is a jealously guarded monopoly of the Church of England. In the result, both in school and university, the picture of the system presented is bound in the overwhelming majority of cases to be that intellectually necessary for the preservation of the existing order. Exactly as in Soviet Russia where truth means "communist" truth, with a *ne varietur* written over the halls of instruction, so, if more subtly, the actual institutions of an unequal society are presented as though they were the in-

escapable inevitabilities of the social order. Our educational system is used not to train the mind as an instrument of critical enquiry but to bend it to the services of certain presuppositions profitable to the oligarchy which lives by their results.

IV

The price we pay for this inequality is a heavy one. The masses are dehumanized. The middle class is, in general, so wrapped up in its pursuit and worship of property that it has hardly the time, and rarely the inclination, for continuous experience of spiritual values. The wealthy pass their lives in feverish search for aimless pleasures which satiate at the moment of their attainment. Social prestige and conventional respectability are not ideals likely to produce a great civilization when they are regarded as ends in themselves. Yet they are the inevitable outcome of a society which regards inequality as its first and most natural law. For what it must do to maintain them as ideals is to frown upon those who do not follow the beaten track. Our personalities must be cast into molds which satisfy the norms of this pitiful principle. Even our charities are thought of not in terms of

their objects, but of those who support them. An English social worker who desires to raise funds for his organization knows perfectly well that he can double his subscriptions if he can persuade the Prince of Wales to permit the use of his name. A theatrical performance for charity in New York in one of the great houses, with members of the Junior League as its pathetic exponents, would raise far more money than one given by the Theatre Guild. Incredible organizations like the Primrose League in England and the Daughters of the American Revolution in America live by their ministration to the instinct for snobbery in an unequal society. What are so curiously termed the great hostesses entertain Mr. Shaw and Mr. Wells, Professor Einstein, and Mr. Ramsay MacDonald not out of interest in, or sympathy for, their ideas, but for the advertising value of their presence at a social function.

The unequal society demands a standardized and uniform outlook as the condition of its preservation. It is fatal to individuality, because individuality implies the novel and the unexpected; and these are dangerous to conventional habits. It has to impose upon its members beliefs, ideas, habits, rules which prevent that affirmation of self

from which the increase of civilization flows. To offer us the type of life our acquisitive society practices is to offer us a religion which leaves unsatisfied the claims alike of knowledge, of beauty, and of manners. The claims of knowledge: for we cannot afford the truth about social or economic organization. We cannot give more than the smatterings of education to the multitude if it is to remain properly subservient to its masters. On most of the vital aspects of sex we maintain a deliberate conspiracy of silence; and the very implications of the phrase "a good marriage" are tragic-comic evidence of the way in which the ideal of sexual comradeship is perverted. The claims, also, of beauty: for these always make room—as our slums, our factories, and our egregious villadom proclaim, to the demands of property. Successful art is either art which meets a vulgar demand or that which receives temporary canonization because it pleases the powerful; and when England wants a trustee of the National Gallery it selects not Roger Fry, but Lord Curzon, not Laurence Binyon, but Sir Philip Sassoon. The claims, finally, of manners; at the base, it is clear enough that manners will not emerge where overcrowding makes impossible the observance of the

elementary decencies of life. The middle and the apex of the pyramid have been amply described for us by Mr. Galsworthy and Proust. Manners do not mean, as our system makes them mean, the uneasy and apprehensive search to maintain one's social position which gives to New York and London, to Paris and Rome, their pathetically elaborate code of trivialities, their ludicrous formalism, their contemptible craving for the publicity of the social column. The Duc de Guermantes, who calls for his ticket at the theater and is able to show a greater courtesy to the attendant than a nobleman of lesser rank because he has a more assured social prestige, is a real symbol of our society.

We live in terror of doing the wrong thing instead of in hope of finding the right. We lack a healthy individualism which might give us the courage to experiment with ourselves. Instead of developing a self-respect born of a satisfied and harmonious personality, we sacrifice ourselves on the Procrustes' bed of traditional conventions each one of which thwarts impulses that are basic to our character. We are trying to have our cake and to eat it—a matter of impossibility in affairs of social logic. We have given the people power in

the realm of politics, and we are trying to pretend to ourselves that the equalization of authority therein implied may rightly cease at its boundaries. The pretense is folly. The whole principle of democracy is nothing less than the affirmation by the people of its own essence; and this is incompatible with irrational privilege in any sphere. The law of democracy is the attachment of prestige not to the accident of birth or wealth but to the performance of social function. A democracy can understand why the President of the United States is important; but sensibly enough, it resents the attachment of importance and power to a leisured aristocracy with no duties save the pursuit of pleasure. It will give its respect to great artists, poets, scientists, philosophers, but it sees no reason to revere Commodore Vanderbilt or that Duke of Norfolk upon whose marriage the London *Times* of half a century ago bestowed the incredible epithalamium of a leading article.

The democratic demand for social and economic equality is, in fact, built upon the simple insistence that without it first things cannot come first. And that simple insistence is impossible in any community where, because the rights of property are unequally distributed, all other rights are

modeled in their image. That is not, it is perhaps worth while to remark, the affirmation of a dangerous radicalism. Conservative philosophers like Aristotle, publicists of genius like Harrington in England and Madison in America, critics of society like Matthew Arnold, all alike have insisted that as the rights of property are, so the complexion of society will be. Make the first unequal, and all else in life for which men strive will adjust itself to those terms. If, doubtless, the distribution of property were built upon a principle of unquestionable justice so that each man received in proportion to his contribution to the common stock, it would not greatly matter that there were differences of position in society. Inequality would then be a function of merit, intelligible and defensible. But this is so demonstrably not the case, that inequality everywhere is the nurse of envy and hate and corruption; and of these, everywhere as well, the outcome is revolution. So that states which seek the postponement of equality have always in themselves a festering sore which is bound to break out sooner or later. They lack the essential condition of stable government, which is a widespread sense of allegiance to the constitution as the protector of the equal rights of men.

"The surest way to prevent seditions," said Bacon, "is to take away the matter of them." Where we have a state in which no man is so rich that he can buy his neighbor and none so poor that he must sell himself we have present the fundamental condition of security. For men who can purchase others are free only at the cost of these; and men who are driven to sell themselves turn naturally to revolution as the alternative to slavery. In an equal state we confer upon all citizens the effective hope of bettering their condition. We elevate the quality of their effort by giving them the right to aspire. We prevent that persistent frustration of impulse which is the major consequence of inequality. The divisions of society build themselves upon the actual service they perform. Upon any other basis this is not the case. Intrust, as we intrust, the governance of the state to an aristocracy, whether of wealth or birth, and it is bound, in the end, to govern badly. For it cannot escape temptation and flattery. It is unacquainted with the realities of life as these are experienced by those over whom it rules. It is driven to elevate its own sense of superiority to the position of a social axiom; and it entirely fails to observe that the axiom is in fact the narrowest of inductions from

the most partial of evidence, the substance of its own desires. The proof of this is simple enough. Confront any aristocracy with novelty, and it is patently incapable of its rational examination. The nobility of the *ancien régime* in France, the Romanoff dynasty in Russia, the English landowner in Ireland, the Austrian conqueror in Italy—these had before their eyes the evidence of a new and inescapable temper with which terms had to be made; and they could only equate it with original sin. Yet great agitations are not marks of popular crime; popular crime is only a mark of great agitation born of some suffering too grievous to be endured. And the root of great agitations is the unchanging passion for equality.

The skeptic, of course, is horrified at a panegyric of this sort. All that we know, he argues, teaches us that men are different in taste and different in talent; to treat them as equals is to fly in the face of elementary principles of nature. But this is to mistake equality for identity. Equality does not mean that the differences of men are to be neglected; it means only that those differences are to be selected for emphasis which are deliberately relevant to the common good. It refuses to admit the legitimacy of barriers which

are born not of the nature of things but of accident illegitimate in its social consequence. It does not mean that the Heaven-sent painter shall be compelled to study of advanced mathematics; but merely that the Heaven-sent painter shall not be driven to waste his talent through absence of organized opportunity. It means a shift in the emphasis of social action from the few to the many. It implies the utilization, of set purpose, of the national resources to the elevation of quality in the ordinary man. It is built upon a belief that when the ordinary man is trained to coöperate in the government of society, his powers are quickened, his self-respect increased. He is something more than a passive spectator of the social process. His individuality becomes articulate; he contributes his little stock of experience and wisdom to the common store. The tradition he inherits is widened and quickened by his knowledge and opinion. The power of social adaptation is strengthened by the wider induction that can be made.

We need not doubt, with the skeptic, that a single individual of outstanding ability will often perform better the functions of government than the members of a democratic state. Cæsar, Crom-

well, Napoleon, Lenin had, doubtless, more energy, more perseverance, more capacity to plan in a wholesale way, and more art to perfect the details of their planning. But the answer to this is at least twofold. The energy, the perseverance, the capacity of the great dictator are almost always from the outset, and, in the end, invariably, purchased at the expense of the growth of those qualities in those over whom they rule. Democracy is not the most efficient form of government, neither is it the most capable of conceiving the greatest ideas. But a democratic government provokes in its citizens that which no other political system is able to secure. There flows from its equality in citizenship a restless energy, a pervasive vitality, more favorable to individuality than any other qualities. The knowledge there that the road lies open to power is a spur and an incentive which neither the favors of a dictatorship nor the prestige of an aristocracy can evoke. And the equalization of citizenship in the political field is itself a safeguard of the public interest. The political leader in a democratic state may be, often enough, less able or less honorable than the leader of an aristocracy. But his tenure of power is subject always to the condition that he must, in the end, submit himself to the will of the

majority. His interest is in the democratic system more securely merged with the interest of the whole than is the case in any alternative scheme. The government of an aristocracy is, at its best, always in some sort a conspiracy against the nation. The very fact that it is protecting the privileged interest of a minority tends to make it shape institutions to its own ends and to protect them against invasion for the benefit of the whole. That has been, of course, unconsciously, the history of the interpretation of the American Constitution by the Supreme Court; and, still more notably and again unconsciously, the history of the interpretation of trade-union law by English judges. Minority government always narrows public policy to mean the perpetuation of its own power.

Nor, finally, must we forget the significance of the historical aspect of the problem. Englishmen, to whom equality is still a strange ideal, Americans, who rarely observe the growth of a privileged aristocracy among themselves, too often forget that the history of society is supremely the history of the abolition of differences which reason cannot explain and justice cannot excuse. That has been the case in the sphere of religion; it has been, in Western civilization, predominantly the case in

politics. Everyone has read the half-dozen remarkable pages in which Tocqueville explained how the movement of French history has been the evolution of an irresistible tendency to equalization of conditions. "Those who have knowingly labored in its cause," he wrote, "and those who have served it unwittingly; those who have fought for it and those who have announced themselves its opponents; all have been driven along the same track; . . . the gradual development of equal conditions . . . possesses all the characteristics of a divine decree: it is universal; it is desirable: it constantly eludes all human interference; and all events as well as all men contribute to its progress."

Certainly it does not appear likely that a democracy which has established equality in religion and politics; which has overthrown the power of churches and kings and aristocracies; will leave untouched the economic and the social field. Yet nothing is more dangerous in social philosophy than the postulation of inevitable victories. The power of inequality is still immense, the interests it protects gigantic. To be optimistic about the prospect of its abdication is folly; to believe that it is certain of defeat is over-confidence. It is the tragedy of modern society that science has made

social conflict the parent of social disaster; for the forces of democracy in this new realm to try their strength with the forces of privilege may well make the second state worse than what they seek to overthrow. We must rather have faith in the power of reason to direct the human spirit to the prospects of concession and sacrifice. We must rather seek to persuade our masters that our equality is their freedom.

MACHIAVELLI AND THE PRESENT TIME

When Robert Mohl published, some sixty years ago, his admirable *History of Political Literature*, the bibliography of comment upon Machiavelli was already ample enough to occupy therein some ninety pages; and the succeeding period has shown no diminution in volume. The paradox embodied by the great Italian has, indeed, been made far more intelligible today by the labors of subsequent historians, though the issues he raised are no more susceptible of a final solution than they were in his own time. For the relation of ethics to politics is not a simple problem capable of definition without regard to time and space. It involves an attitude to fundamental questions—the meaning of historic experience, the nature of man, the purpose of the state. These will present themselves differently to thinkers according to the conditions they confront. For political philosophy is, by its very nature, pragmatic. Its practitioners do not sit down to write a treatise as dispassionate

and universal as an exposition of geometry. In a real sense, what they attempt is autobiography, the reaction upon themselves of a special environment individually interpreted. After all, what we call the great political thinkers are only those whose reactions have been most coincident with the eternal experience of mankind.

No thinker has so suffered at the hands of his interpreters as Machiavelli. Most generally, it has been assumed that he made a Moloch of success; and, regardless either of his assumptions or of his environment, such critics have set themselves to show that, despite him, honesty can be made to pay. Or it has been urged that he was a great satirist, and that his book is a veiled attack, the more keenly made because of its disguise, upon the methods of the Italian tyrant; by revealing, it is said, the logic of remorseless tyranny, Machiavelli demonstrated its final wickedness. Or, once more, it has been argued that the doctrines he seemed to preach are, in fact, the simple truth about human nature in politics; and we are bidden, as Catherine de' Medici is said to have enjoined upon her children, to instruct ourselves by reading *surtout des traictz de cet athée Machiavel.* Another school prefers the theory of Machiavelli

the patriot; and we are then urged to regard him as the far-sighted precursor of Mazzini and Cavour. Two things, at least, are certain. To understand Machiavelli we must regard him essentially as an Italian of the sixteenth century; and, further, we must read the *Prince*, not as a summary of his creed, but as a fragment of a larger whole, of which, for instance, the far more profound *Discourses* are at least of equal significance. In this ample context, there emerges a Machiavelli essentially human, even if less simple than most critics would make him. The complexity is important; for Machiavelli was a great man, and, save in the sphere of religion, great men have rarely the character of simplicity.

Machiavelli, indeed, is peculiarly unintelligible save in the context of the feverish and decadent brilliance of Italy at the end of the fifteenth century. A man of ambition, an ardent lover of his country, bitten, like most of that hard-living and passionate generation, with the hunger for power and fame, he differs mainly from the mass of his contemporaries in his capacity to digest the experience he encountered. Nor must we fail to emphasize the degree in which he was of his age. Like it, he sought to specialize in universality. The

diplomat is the administrator; the historian is also the strategist; the political philosopher wrote poetry which, without distinction, is at least not contemptible, and one comedy which competent judges have declared at least equal to Goldoni and hardly inferior to the best of Congreve.

To exhaust the potentialities of human nature, to dare all by experiencing all, was the keynote of the time. A new world had come into being. The old landmarks had been swept away; religion had ceased, at least for ambitious men, to be a canon of conduct, and had become an instrument of control. Birth counted less than capacity as the avenue to position. Status had vanished before the subtle brain and the iron will of the new men. Careers like those of the Medici and the Sforza had shown the immense opportunities laid open to men careless of tradition and willing to make all things new. This febrile spaciousness was true not merely of Italy alone. Machiavelli saw it there, indeed, at its most intense degree; but he might have experienced it also in Spain and France, in Germany and England. Few statesmen of the sixteenth century, pope or emperor, secretary of state or Reformation leader, but accounted means little in comparison with mighty ends. What Machi-

avelli did was to write with dexterity especially skillful the philosophy of the experience he had known and felt more intimately than most. The men whom he had intimately known were the Iagos and Othellos, the Macbeths and Iachimos, of life; it is not then astonishing that his conclusions should have been built upon his sense of their habits as these worked in the environment most suited to their expression. To the hunter who sets out for the jungle, it is useless to offer a text-book on the ways of the domestic animal.

Machiavelli, in fact, wrote a grammar of power for the use of sixteenth-century Italy. Building upon the world about him, he explained, with a pungency and incisiveness which only Bacon and Hobbes can claim to equal, the way in which alone, as he knew contemporary Italy, the state could be made strong and enduring. He did not inquire whether it was right to attain position in that way; nor did he suggest that other and better ways did not exist. He sought, the evidence seems to show, two essential things: first, the rules which govern the individual's ability to realize his will in a world where such realization was, without regard to its moral substance, the highest ambition recognized by men; and, second, how, in

a world of fraud and force and passion, to keep what one has gained. He made entire abstraction of moral argument for obvious reasons. In the world about him, in any case, they had no place; and, moreover, by making power the highest good, he was *a priori*, ruling out the discussion of moral argument in the accepted sense of the term. He asked himself how, in a world where Cesare Borgia could be ardently admired, the rules which govern the attainment of power are to be formulated; and he set them down as he found them.

Let it be added that there is evidence and to spare that Machiavelli was alive to the extraordinary nature of the conditions he was discussing. The *Prince* is not a code of conduct for every-day life; it is a text-book for the house of Medici set out in the terms their own history would make them appreciate and, so set out, that its author might hope for their realization of his insight into the business of government. Like every heart-sick exile, Machiavelli sought the terms of compromise with the power by which he had been defeated. No one, indeed, can seriously read the *Prince* without seeing that, for Machiavelli himself, it was partial, and incomplete as an expression of his total outlook. It is the essay of an advocate who

will not, of set purpose, go beyond the facts of his brief. The Medici seek to know how they may perpetuate their power. The *Prince* is at once an effort to enlighten them and a self-contributed testimonial to its author's quality.

But it must be read in the context of the *Discourses*; and it then becomes obvious how much a *livre de circonstance* it is. For if the *Discourses* have any lessons, they teach the nobility of republican Rome, the worth of democracy, the viciousness of Cæsarism. No ruler, says Machiavelli, can ever hope for safety, save as he builds upon the favor of the people. Popular affection is stronger than fortresses—it is always an evil thing to destroy a free government. It is bad not to provide against extra-legal action by constitutional forms. It is never virtuous to betray one's friends or to kill one's fellow-citizens. A people is always more grateful and less avaricious than a prince. Power is poisonous only where it is usurped; for where it is given by the free suffrage of a commonwealth it is rarely exercised without responsibility. Most of the evils from which a people suffers are traceable to faults in its governors. Treaties enforced by the sword lack that consent which is the essence of obligation. These are not the maxims of

Machiavellianism as that term is usually understood. And they enforce the point that, at heart, Machiavelli was always loyal to the Florentine Republic as to that greater Italy beyond of which he permitted himself to dream. Utopia is inscribed upon his map; and for all the brave show of *Realpolitik* we catch his glance straying with a sense of longing in its direction.

Behind all this, doubtless, there is a low view of men, and a firm disbelief in the idea, or even possibility of progress. For Machiavelli, history shows no eternal laws; its events are the outcome of capricious fortune, and change occurs as the relentless men bend institutions to their will. The lesson, then, is clear. If you would be master of your fate, you must not shrink from what the events demand. Choose kindness, charity, justice, if in them are the seeds of success. But show, above all, resolution, the inflexible determination which makes obstacles opportunities, the hypocrisy of the fox, and the courage of the lion. These are the qualities that bring the leader to his goal. For when Machiavelli emphasizes the evil nature of men, when, too, he insists upon the cyclic character of history, what he has in mind is that those who are destined to lead in politics are, for the

most part, evil men, driven by their fate to seek authority. It is the pervasive atmosphere of all he wrote that government, even at its best, is a grim business. He seems to add that, grim as it is, government there must be; and he sought to depict, within the range of his special experience, the conditions of its maintenance in the sort of world amid which he moved.

II

It would be easy to show that Machiavelli's underlying assumptions about men are as unwarranted and inadequate as those Rousseau made in an opposite direction. Theories which build upon the over-simple faith that men are either wholly good or wholly bad are bound to result in a distorted political philosophy. The facts are more complex; and it is only as we take account of their formidable intricacy that we are likely to arrive at adequate canons of conduct. All that Machiavelli said is doubtless true of a world composed wholly of men such as those he chiefly knew; and, amid kindred historic surroundings, his insistence that means will count as little in comparison with ends has been verified again and again

in the subsequent generations. But any reader of his book will be convinced that, its over-simple psychology apart, it has two great flaws from which permanent error was bound to result.

It fails, in the first place, to relate effect to cause. By its exaltation of Fortune as the master-clue to historic change, it abandons altogether the prospect of a political philosophy. For in the life of a people what is important is not military defeat, or the existence of corruption, commercial prosperity, or political subjugation. To render them intelligible we must grasp the causes which made them possible. It is clear, for instance, that, granted variety of religious belief, there is a definite connection between religious toleration and commercial prosperity. It is obvious that the corruption of American cities is not the outcome of some special badness in the American people, but a function of many causes, which, reproduced elsewhere, would have brought about a condition recognizably similar in substance. It is certain that any state will be tyrannical where religious and political powers are united in the same hands. We know that the great changes of class-structure are largely the outcome of changes in the system of economic production; and these, in their turn,

will affect the ethics, religion, even the direction of scientific discovery in the people concerned. The laws of historic change, in a word, may lack but their kinship to them makes the accidents of the neat precision of laws in the natural sciences, Fortune of third-rate and not first-rate importance.

Machiavelli, in the second place, enormously exaggerated the importance of the individual. It is, of course, true that the contribution of a great man to his age may recognizably alter its character and direction; but an age is not his creature as much as his opportunity. Cromwell was possible in an England torn by civil war; but in the England of the eighteenth century he might well have been no more than a satisfied follower of Walpole. Napoleon owed his emergence to the chaos resultant on two centuries of misgovernment at home and unsuccessful war abroad; Lenin built upon similar circumstances in the Russia of our day. The thesis, in fact, that Machiavelli lays down holds only when the conditions are extraordinary in character. Political success in a period of instability will always belong to the able and unscrupulous adventurer who is careless of the means by which he reaches his goal. With consummate insight Machiavelli laid down the

eternal rules for such an age. And the answer to him, except in detail, is not the denial that his insight was consummate, but the discovery of the conditions which make possible the instability that he knew.

What, indeed, is most striking in the *Prince* is less its cynical disregard of the normal standards conduct, than the accuracy with which it depicted the necessary conditions of political controversy in any situation where there is no general appreciation of right and wrong. Let men feel injustice passionately, and there is no injustice they will not perpetrate in the endeavor to remedy the original grievance. Make possible the existence of dubious roads to power or fortune, and men will, despite all possible consequence, travel along those roads so long as they have confidence that danger is remote. Give men the conviction that they hold the truth which is the price of salvation, and they will torture and imprison their dearest friends in the assured belief that they act for the sake of those friends. To criticize Machiavelli for having said these things with a clarity so admirable is to miss completely the lesson they imply.

Indeed, it would not be unfair to argue that, in the history of Machiavellian criticism, the inten-

sity of invective that has been leveled against him is a measure of the obloquy the critic himself should bear. It is merely ironical that the sixteenth-century papacy should have placed his book upon the Index, and when the Jesuits burned him in effigy at Ingoldstadt, they were, in truth, only revealing their self-reproach at the source from which their technique was drawn. Frederick the Great's reputation is not only built upon a total misunderstanding of Machiavelli, but it reads as mere hypocrisy from the author of the Partition of Poland. The criticism of Machiavelli, indeed, has curiously adjusted itself to the mood of European politics. Where it has been theological in texture, it is Machiavelli's conception of religion as an instrument of state that has been the chief target of attack. Where, as in the century and a half before the French Revolution, political institutions have drifted toward absolutism, Machiavelli has been attacked as the man who devised the instruments of tyranny. Each party in conflict has always used his name as a stone to throw at its rival; and "Hudibras" Butler merely identified Machiavelli with the Devil as a summary of the critical tendencies of the preceding century.

Our business is to disregard such easy invective.

We must rather seek to remember less the degree to which Machiavelli is himself a "constant and contemporary influence," than the degree to which the doctrines he so magistrally summarized are the enduring basis of political action. "He is," wrote Lord Acton, "the earliest conscious and articulate exponent of certain living forces in the present world." Wherever men feel passionately that their end is so great that it is useless to count the cost, there will be found, consciously or unconsciously, a disciple of Machiavelli. Most notably, of course, this will be the case in a period of revolution; and the student of Lenin's writings, or of the speeches of Mussolini will have no difficulty in detecting the school to which they belong. For every revolutionary leader stands poised upon the edge of an abyss; and to safeguard his precarious hold he will do to others things that, attempted against himself, he pronounces the apogee of wrong. His followers will applaud his power of relentless decision; while his enemies will insist that he debases the moral currency of mankind. So the followers of Lenin have insisted that the excesses of Bolshevism are a small price to pay for its ultimate prospect; and the disciples of Mussolini have excused the outrages of Fascism

on the ground that their leader seeks to vaccinate Italy against the virus of Communist doctrine. The advocates of Irish freedom were outraged by the excesses of British troops in Ireland; but they had little difficulty in accepting the violence of Sinn Feiners as the inevitable result of a nation struggling to be free. Republican France, before the war, was horrified by the undemocratic character of Imperial Germany; but its alliance with Tsarist Russia did not, for the most part, revolt the conscience of its citizens.

The temptation, of course, is to throw up one's hands and to insist that man and reason are strangers to one another. Life is a jungle, and the habits of the jungle alone insure survival. Men are a mean and little breed; and force and fear only can keep them to the straight path. So Machiavelli judged; so, also, the greatest of his English disciples, Thomas Hobbes. And it is possible, as Lord Acton and a score of other historians have shown, to compile a formidable list of eminent men whose judgment upon the lesson of history is similar in substance. In a way, perhaps, the most striking reflection of all from whom such comment has come is that of the second Earl Grey. There was no Liberal cause of moment, in the

period from the French Revolution to the first Reform Bill, of which he was not a devoted advocate. He endured long years of political disaster rather than surrender the principles of liberty he held dear. His private life was stainless, and the record of his relationship to wife and children has something about it of almost idyllic quality. His tenure of office was brief, less than five years in a political career of nearly half a century; too brief, certainly, for him to have been infected by the poison of power. Yet at the end of his life his final summary was not very different from Machiavelli's: "I am a great lover of morality, public and private," he told the Princess Lieven; "but intercourse of nations cannot be strictly regulated by that rule." What is this, after all, but the famous maxim of Bacon, "It is the solecism of power to think to command the end and yet not to endure the means"?

III

The true answer to Machiavelli's plea is not a simple one. In part, indeed, the answer is one that can be rendered in his own terms. Much of the evidence he considered he seriously misjudged. He

wrote of Savonarola that the prophet without arms is doomed to destruction, and in the next generation Calvin arose to confound his maxim. All that he sought for was embodied in Napoleon; and the end was the barren exile of Saint Helena. Bismarck's triumph in 1870 seemed to canonize the doctrine of force and fraud as the midwives of successful policy; but the fruit of Sedan was the recovery of Alsace-Lorraine and the annihilation of the Hohenzollern. To Pilate, doubtless, Christ was an incident destructive of the peaceful process of administration; yet he proved that the authority of moral appeal is, in the long run, not less potent than the might of armed legions.

That is not to say that force and fraud have not won their victories. To act upon a disbelief in the possibilities of human good has, only too often, brought immense reward. Against its underlying view, we are at least entitled to argue two things. We can say, firstly, that its antithesis is not less true; belief that human nature can be trusted has, at least as often, brought a great reward to its adherents. We can, in the second place, argue with historic justice on our side, that the doctrine of means as the slave of ends is, in its Machiavellian form, incomplete and inadequate. For it is the

sober lesson of the record that the means enter into the end and transform it. The Jesuits served a great ideal, but the way in which they served it made the end itself meaningless to them. That imperialist school which sought to confer the blessings of Western civilization on Africa and the ancient East, were the protagonists of a high cause; but the Congo showed that men who are careless in their instruments soon come to disregard their original purpose. The roots of loyalty are ultimately moral in character; and over any lengthy period men can be won to the service of others only in proportion as the purpose they are asked to follow is a high one. Seven centuries of force did not win the affection of Ireland for Great Britain; Austria even yet drains the cup she had prepared for Italian consumption. Power, in brief, is never long accorded to minds incapable of great purposes and prepared to achieve them by means correspondingly generous. For a leader cannot count upon followers whose support is a matter of purchase. In the final assessment, his supporters will always act upon the motives he assumes them to possess.

Another aspect of this problem is important. For the most part, even in the internal aspect of

the state, the will that Machiavelli considers is one that does not seek the consent of those upon whom it is to be imposed. Fragile though it is, modern constitutionalism has shown that there exists at least a wide prospect of achieving this result. Where a whole people participates in political life, where the sense of interest in the political drama is widely diffused, and the education to understand it as wide as the interest, most Machiavellian axioms are, *a priori* at a discount. It is doubtless true, as Sir Henry Maine once argued, that the pathology of party conflict is as susceptible now as in other realms and ages to the analysis Machiavelli made: certainly, the "boss" of an American state or city has recognizable kinship with the *condottiere* of sixteenth-century Italy. Parties will attain power by fraud and deliberate deceit; but what is important in the modern democratic state is the fact that they cannot hope by those means to retain power for long. Government by discussion engenders a capacity for self-regeneration to which no other system, however powerful in appearance, can pretend. It is, of course, vital that the discussion shall be free; and it is not less urgent that men should be prepared to abide by its results. Yet the history of Europe and

America since the middle of the eighteenth century does suggest a growing sensitiveness to the infliction of unnecessary pain which sets ever higher standards in national conduct and national legislation. We move, it may be, at a snail's pace, and upon an irregular front; but it would be sheer blindness in the face of the facts to deny that we move.

It would be folly, of course, to deny that there has been no corresponding and proportional improvement in international relationships; there, at least, the maxims of Machiavellianism have retained no small degree of their former empire. *Raison d'état* has been held, even among high-minded men, to justify activities which they would, in their own interests, refuse with passion to contemplate. The sentiment of nationalism still persuades men and peoples to crimes that the detached observer cannot for a moment condone. Yet, even here, an unmixed pessimism is beyond the evidence. It is important that the diplomacy of the Bismarckian epoch should have issued in the Great War. For there was demonstrated, beyond the possibility of error, the price we have to pay for acting upon the assumption that nations stand in the posture of gladiators and may hew their

way to success. What war has shown is not merely the cost of violating the necessary foundations of human well-being to those who provide at least the immediate occasion thereof, but, not less clearly, that a Carthaginian peace is something less than a Pyrrhic victory. It became clear that the weapons now at the disposal of men prepared to will war can have no other result than to make civilization a mere legend of memory. In the result men have turned seriously for the first time to organize that hinterland between peoples where, formerly, the unbridled license of the sovereign state held sway. Naturally enough, the work is as yet partial and fragmentary. But it is important to notice that no other effort in our own time has enlisted on its behalf a passion so widespread or so intense. Reason of state was, a decade ago, a ground for resisting international obligation; a generation hence, and it may well be a cause for insisting upon its observance.

IV

Nothing of this can be taken to mean that we have the right to optimism. The forces which contend for mastery in the modern world are dark

and vast, and they are impatient for victory. Many of them are still willing to risk all on some gambler's throw of the dice. Others are driven to rebellion by persecution that is as unintelligent in its inception as it is pernicious in its execution. We have to pin our faith to the frail bark of reason in a sea of stormy waters. We know the inevitability of change; we know, also, that no great change can be effected without touching interests which are powerful enough, if they so will, to repel its onset, and it appears, often enough, as though the choice before us is between self-sacrifice and conflict.

It is to the former that those must look who seek the means of response to Machiavelli. For conflict means the reëmergence of a world like the Italy he knew in which every man who seeks power is destined to become an Ishmael. Certainly to abandon the path of change by ordered discussion means the passage of power to men who have rarely been tried by service, and are often incapable of disinterestedness. It was a common saying of Mr. Gladstone's that of all the characters he met in his varied experience of life politicians were the most mysterious. In a normal time what is worst in the lust for power is inhibited by the call

of tradition and the necessity for compromise. But in an epoch of conflict the dark uncertainties call for audacious men capable of desperate expedients. It is futile in such periods to seek for moderation or for principle. The stakes of success are too high; the price of defeat is too terrible. We have seen how every revolution gives opportunity to the adventurer to substitute his private ambition for the party's cause. And even when the party maintains its original purpose, the means it must utilize, the passions to which it must appeal, make it more than dubious whether the end it seeks to serve can be attained in the atmosphere it is driven by its position to create.

When conflict is so loosed, the nature of men in its context becomes what Machiavelli assumed it normally to be. That is why no man has a right to abandon the prospect of constitutional effort until he is forced by his opponents to change his ground. More, he has never the right so to act as to deprive them, as they feel, of the weapons of legitimate controversy. It must never be forgotten that what to statesmen is a struggle for power is always to the common people a struggle for bread. It is this which makes so important in a state the capacity for self-sacrifice, particularly among those

who have been favored by fortune in the struggle for existence. That capacity, at any rate, is the chief guaranty a state possesses of the continual enlargement of its freedom. Unquestionably, it means in its operation equality; and it has been the fashion even with liberal thinkers to represent equality as the enemy of liberty. It is a mistaken diagnosis. In the economic sphere, there is never liberty of contract until there is equality of bargaining power; in the political sphere liberty is always meaningless until the humble man possesses, through the medium of equality, assurance that the knowledge of his wants impresses itself with emphasis upon the holders of power. For inequality in a state is the nurse of exactly those characteristics—envy, hate, faction—which give the opportunity to what we call Machiavellianism. Without equality, the mind of the community cannot be alive either to the fascination of knowledge or to the power of beauty. Where it is absent, each class is occupied in an envious striving to dethrone its rivals; and in the heat and stress of antagonism the cement of the social structure is rapidly loosened. In a world of equals, there would still be the ambitious search for power, but it would be elevated and ennobled by being har-

nessed to purposes of which the result would be widespread benefit.

In some such fashion as this, it seems possible to construct an answer to Machiavelli's theorems. It is worth while remarking how urgent it is that the effort to answer him should be made. We live in a period in which, as in the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, the main occupation of thinkers is the dissection and discarding of the traditions we have inherited. Men are conscious of an intense *malaise*, and, along with it, there goes a volume of scientific discovery which makes the problem of social understanding of peculiarly high importance. We are escaping from a materialistic philosophy which closed the eyes of men to the possibilities of conscious coöperation. We know that the environment can be profoundly modified by ourselves. It can be modified along the most varied lines of which the gospel, as Machiavelli taught it, is peculiarly arresting and prominent. In a sense it is the easiest alternative to choose, since it appeals to the most obvious prejudices of men and demands, less than any other, the duty of arduous reflection. But it is a gospel of death. And it is the more disastrous because it is offered to us in a period of unstable equilibrium.

It invites support from all who have an interest in disorder; it tends to persuade all who are weary of the struggle against injustice. It tempts the holders of power by suggesting to them that an onslaught upon their competitors may give them the assurance of enduring authority.

In fact, as Machiavelli himself saw, it offers no prospect save that of perpetuating all the evils it seeks to destroy. It offers a momentary advantage in exchange for the prospect of a certain renewal of war. It sharpens in men all that is most inimical to the forces that have exercised a civilizing influence in history. It is the more important to reject it in an age of crisis because, as a rule, periods such as our own, when traditions, ideals, standards, are thrown into the melting-pot, are the creative epochs of history. We seem, both in the sciences and in the arts, to tremble on the verge of great discoveries. We need the passionate denial of maxims that make for conflict if we are to reap the advantages they seem to presage.

CAN BUSINESS BE CIVILIZED?

"The universal regard for money," writes Mr. Bernard Shaw, "is the one hopeful fact in our civilization, the one sound spot in our social conscience." Certainly, anyone who sought a formula to describe the essence of the Western spirit could hardly do better than experiment with the possibilities of the will to economic power. The successful business man is as much the representative type of our age as Luther was of the Reformation, or Voltaire of the eighteenth century. If we want to know how a typical German thought when the spiritual contours of Europe were being reconstructed, it is to Luther's letters and table-talk that we should go; if we want to depict what was happening to the mind of that elegant society which, after 1715, moved so rapidly to self-destruction, we should seek alike its virtues and its errors in the inexhaustible intelligence of Voltaire's seventy volumes. Until the nineteenth century there is hardly a period in which the business man defines in any significant way the character of his time. We know,

of course, that he was there, but he was an anonymous presence. We did not build our character, our hopes, our institutions upon the things he held as necessary or desirable.

The scene has changed. The business man has emerged from his obscurity, and he occupies the center of the stage. Our lives are subdued to the medium in which he works. Men like Mr. Ford are known as few statesmen, and certainly no creative artist or thinker, have ever been known. Their lives are written, their autobiographies recorded for them, with the funereal solemnity proper to the rulers of the earth. Their very thoughts are news. Their wishes create new industries and alter completely the standards of taste in the old. Granted only success of an enduring kind, and they live upon the same exalted eminence that the Middle ages reserved for their saints. There is no sin they may not be forgiven, no honor they may not receive. They are patrons of churches, founders of universities, creators of a new aristocracy. Whatever their past, they are certain of social idolatry in the measure of their wealth. And upon the saving condition that they keep it, they are held up to the coming generation as patterns to be emulated. Their appearance becomes almost a sermon,

and their speeches take on the solemn form of a religious liturgy, a gospel according to Smiles that, in the end, they come to believe themselves. And the elegant minuet they perform, with society as an obedient and enraptured partner, is undisturbed so long as society respects their supremacy in the partnership.

For these men represent a power more ample in its incidence upon the common life than was ever exercised by those not clothed with public authority. Mr. Morgan and his partners, the Governor and Company of the Bank of England, Standard Oil, the Comité des Forges, these are, in a basic sense, principalities which treat with the states they encounter on a footing of equality. They stand for men who, having supremely realized the will to economic power, have fulfilled the ultimate ambition of our civilization. They represent, of course, the summit of business achievement. Below them we have to visualize an interminable procession of men to whom little else is known, and nothing else significant, beside the inner dream of emulating their record. No impulse is so wide or so strong as the will they create by their success. Nothing has so complete a control over the processes of civilization. They can buy courts and legislatures,

make war and peace; and the grim anxiety of Russia to stimulate their interest is a fascinating measure of their authority. Princes and politicians have passed from the stage. The sovereignty of the common people which was the dream of a hundred years ago has passed: one sees its passing in the proud boast of Mussolini that if he has made Italy unfree, at least he has given her efficiency—the condition of economic success. The business man has, indeed, imposed his faith from China to Peru. He has taught whole nations to believe that economic effort is desirable in itself, and that the more intense the effort, without regard to the end it is to serve or the way in which it is to serve that end, the better for society. Having made poverty a sin, it has made wealth good, and the effort to obtain wealth an obvious service to the state. And it has, thereby, been able to insist that all barriers which stand in the way of wealth, all limitations, accordingly, upon the rights of property, are a definite hindrance to social well-being. Like Adam Smith, it has assumed an inscrutable decree of a beneficent providence whereby the greater the acquisitiveness of the individual, the more ample are his services to society. As the pearl is concealed in the oyster, as ambergris is produced by the disease of

Leviathan, so in the interstices of the business man's self-love is mysteriously secreted the progress of humanity. It was the gospel of Mr. Baldwin; it is the gospel of President Hoover; it is enshrined in the stately diction of the Fourteenth Amendment and its interpreters. Its only defect is its failure to conform to the facts.

II

For in the period since the Industrial Revolution brought the business man to his unexampled supremacy, the one great lesson we have grimly learned is the utter inadequacy of the profit-making motive to build a well-ordered society. When Belgian business men transform the Congo into a nightmare of unspeakable horror, that is the profit-making motive. When a great steel company sends a gatling gun mounted upon an armored train through a Colorado village at night, that is the profit-making motive. When business men persuade the president of the Board of Education to abandon an attempt to give children education beyond the age of fourteen, that is the profit-making motive. When the Ohio gang uses the public authority of the United States corruptly to line its

own pockets, that, again, is the profit-making motive. Its essence, in short, is the insistence that gain in a pecuniary sense is the standard by which all other activities in life ought to be judged; and it is because we have acquiesced in the imposition of this view that we confront a future so naturally implicit with the danger of conflict.

We have discovered, in fact, in the last twenty-five years that the supremacy of the profit-making motive is inconsistent with the achievement of an adequate life. It mistakes means for ends. It measures wealth not by the personal quality of men and women but by the volume of trade. It means standardized homes and standardized minds. It promotes international rivalry because its increased productivity involves the harnessing of crude nationalism to its feverish search for markets. It means industrial strife because the distribution of the product is made, not in terms of moral principle, but of a raw disposition of forces in which the victory is to the stronger. It sets up property as a graven image, and makes all systems and men in its likeness because it can recognize no good save the acquisition of property. So that they who possess property become the priests of its religion, and the argument of their faith is the need, at all costs,

to protect the integrity of its rights. It does not think in terms of service to the community because, by definition, the preservation of the rights of property is the supreme service a citizen can render to the community. And when the community inquires how men can in fact render service without regard to what the rights of property effect for those who do not enjoy them, the whole machinery of press and state is directed to the suppression of this ignorant blasphemy.

What our generation is slowly learning is the folly of accepting the claims of the business man to supremacy. Exactly as we have come to insist that the relation between states must be built upon the assumption of their subjection to principle, that their will, in other words, is unfitted for supremacy over other wills merely by reason of its power, so in the world of industry it is dawning upon us that the authority of business men must be referable also to principle. We have been taught, for instance, by Mr. Justice Holmes that even so sacred a phrase as liberty of contract is meaningless unless we set it in the context of equality of bargaining power. We have learned from experience of social legislation that there are certain minimum conditions of wages, hours of labor, education in

the absence of which men cease to be men. We have insisted that the individual is entitled in the sphere of politics to the protection which consists in choosing those by whom he is to be governed; and the corollary is being forced upon us that he will choose to be governed by those whose purpose is the fulfilment of his wants. But those wants, in turn, are incompatible with such a sphere for the profit-making motive as the nineteenth century regarded as its legitimate field. They involve a conception of property as a return to service deemed by the community to minister to the good life. Property, we are beginning to say, is justifiable where it results from effort made for ends and in ways of which the community approves. We are beginning to look upon it not, as in the American Constitution, as a sacred right, but as a return made to one who performs a function which society regards as beneficent. We are seeking, that is to say, such a regulation of the profit-making motive as will make the business man the servant, and not the master, of the state.

It is easy enough to see that this is the case. Even when Eli Whitney's invention of the cotton-gin had remade slavery a profitable industry, we abolished the right to property in human beings.

When it was discovered that long hours of slavery to a machine degraded men and women to the level of beasts, we introduced the regulation of the hours of labor. The minimum wage has sought deliberately to injure the employer in trades parasitic upon the defenselessness of the worker. Factory Acts, Compulsory Education, Workmen's Compensation Acts, Employers' Liability Acts are all recognitions that there are principles to which the making of profit must be subordinate. The insistence upon legislation against the traffic in women and noxious drugs is evidence of a determination to establish fields of activity in which no profit shall be made at all. The Conservation Movement in America, the growing effort in England to preserve historic monuments and places, like Stonehenge, of natural beauty, tend to show that, at some point, however inadequate, we admit that the profit-making motive brings with it a nemesis we cannot afford. All this, in its way, is evidence of a temper that the men who made the Industrial Revolution would hardly have understood. They were obsessed by the vision of power for its own sake; we are beginning to ask to what uses power is to be devoted. They were interested in the mere scale of life; we are beginning to ask

questions about its quality. When Adam Smith wrote of civil government that "in so far as it is instituted for the protection of property, (it) is in reality instituted for the defense of the rich against the poor," he said what was a commonplace to his generation. But we have begun, or been compelled, to inquire whether a civilization can endure which is permanently divided into rich and poor; whether, in a word, the latter, having attained political power, will be content to go on as hewers of wood and drawers of water to their masters. A wise approach to that question sets it in the perspective of the Russian Revolution. We must civilize business, or, in the end, there will be nothing left of civilization itself.

III

I mean by civilization a condition of social life in which men have leisure for noble ends. It is obvious that the mere acquisition of property is not a noble end; and a society, therefore, in which the profit-making motive determines the general temper has lost the clue whereby civilization may be found. Yet the condition of such a society is not difficult of attainment if we but have the will

to seek for it. The condition is a determination on our part to make the principles of industrial organization definitely referable to a moral end. Those who labor in business, that is to say, must regard themselves not as merely concerned with personal gain, but as servants of a function the purpose of which is the release of society from the conflict with nature. But to serve a function is to be no longer a master. To serve a function is to admit that the property one receives, the orders one issues, are all of them explicable in terms of reason. Clearly, on such a view, what I own I must possess only as a result of effort I myself have made. Otherwise, my ownership is not a return for service that I have performed, and there is neither moral justification nor social expediency in its recognition; for what I have is then merely a claim to maintenance because someone else has labored and I am purely parasitic upon society. Even, moreover, if I work myself, what I obtain from my effort must be reasonably measured against what other people obtain in such fashion as to make the difference one that a recognizable benefit to society justifies. Yet it is obvious that the present distribution of wealth both to functionless owners and to men whose immense gains are unrelated to true

service is an outstanding and indefensible scandal. We cannot seriously defend the royalties, say, on coal of the ducal landowners in England, or the difference in annual income of a great medical man like Lord Lister and a great pill-maker like Sir Joseph Beecham.

Nor can we defend a social order in which the whole executive control of business enterprise is entrusted to irresponsible private hands. Every command of a modern government affects the life of the citizen-body; and it has to be justified, accordingly, to the legislative assembly of the state. But most commands of the business man affect the lives of his employees; yet, for the most part, we leave them absolutely autocratic in character. He can hire and fire as he pleases. He can, with the assent of shareholders, issue stock as he pleases. He can appoint fellow-directors without regard to competence. He can issue balance sheets from which no real insight into his business can be obtained. He can drive his labor to a point where it is incapable of a creative use of leisure. So long as the property he represents is under his control, its rights mean that he has to answer to no one for his actions. Outside a narrow limit of conduct prescribed by the law, he is the unlimited master

of the field. And so long as his conduct of business shows a profit, his shareholders will be well content. Not one in ten thousand will believe that he has an iota of responsibility for the manner in which his dividends are earned. It is the very nature of business enterprise to neglect no expedient that may serve the attainment of profit; and its recipients regard that attainment as the final test of adequacy.

The result we all know. Adulteration, the promotion of fraudulent corporations, the appointment of men to directorships who cannot conceivably be of use in the enterprise, a nepotism which is without limit, a hypertrophy of advertisement and selling agencies for which the consumer has to pay, consistent over-production, with commercial crisis as its natural consequence, the maintenance of a permanent army of unemployed through maladjustment of supply and demand, the growth of monopoly, the waste of natural resources—these are only some of the outstanding defects of the system. They are the consequence of making business standards the measure of social standards. If, on the contrary, we insisted that the rights of property in industry arose out of a recognition of its duties, and that these were born of an

insistence that industry must provide the basis upon which the spiritual life of the society is to be lived, we should set the organization of industry in a background which would subordinate the claims of the business man to an end which would reduce them to rationality. For when we know the end of any function, we can adapt its organization to realize that end. At present, the end of business is to make money; and its methods, because they pay account to no other purpose, necessarily leave out of account that social factor which could alone make business the servant of civilization.

I know that in general business men are admirable husbands and devoted parents. I know also that, again in general, they work hard and constantly at a life where they are as much the slaves of routine as those over whom they rule. Indeed, not the least indictment of the system is its effect upon the active business man. He is grossly ignorant of our intellectual heritage: he rarely reads at all, and, if he does, it is rather to drug himself than to enlarge his mind. For the most part, he is incapable of conversation about principles. His talk consists of gossip about his business, scandal about his neighbors, his scores at bridge or golf, and the

exchange of the queer facts he amasses as information to none of which can he attach a scheme of values. As he conducts his life, most of the essence of civilized existence escapes him. He has to take for granted the great literature of the world, its great art, its science, its music. His opinions on politics are more futile than that of any comparable class charged with an important social function. Even in his own field, he is rarely capable of linking cause and effect. Ask for his views upon the gold standard, the effect of industrial combination, the influence of Asiatic standards of life upon world-cost of production, the consequence of a protective tariff, and you receive a faltering body of half-truths which would disgrace a first-year student of economics in the correspondence class of a business college. The mind of labor is usually a closed book to him; trade unions are almost always an unintelligent method of preventing an imaginary being called the hard-working laborer from doing his best; and he has rarely any other explanation of strikes than that they are the work of agitators who ought to be suppressed. He accepts more mythology about politics and economics than have ever been accepted in the Western World about religion. He thinks the Republican

party responsible for prosperity. He thinks that governments are incapable of the successful conduct of enterprises. He really believes that a fortune lies open to the talented by reason of a supposed free competition. He is convinced, alike in England and America, that he lives under democratic institutions. No social type in the modern world is more completely the slave of habit without philosophy than the average business man.

All this is the inevitable consequence of a society in which all activity is subordinated to the making of wealth, in which, as a result, man is respected in terms of the property to which he is annexed. Obviously, society shapes itself in terms of its fundamental purpose; and all social institutions mold themselves to suit the environment a respect for wealth as such creates. Our universities naturally choose wealthy men as their governors; our churches never have difficulty in making terms with the millionaires whose old age is infected with religiosity. The theater, the arts, literature, all prostrate themselves eagerly before the demands of those with money to spend. The whole temper of our civilization, in fact, is poisoned by the triumphant position of wealthy men. They have no standards of consumption, as Mr. Veblen has

so amply shown, save that of conspicuous waste; and our entire scheme of social values is mainly adjusted to their incredible wants. The visitor to Newport or Monte Carlo, to Palm Beach or Cannes, the observer who scrutinizes the social columns of a London newspaper, the critic who watches the preposterous competition between those who collect rare books and pictures—these would, I think, find it difficult not to conclude that this world is, in fact, the lunatic asylum of the planets.

IV

Yet the way of readjustment lies directly to our hand. It is twofold in character. It involves, first, an insistence that property shall be a return to the personal performance of creative work, and second, that the rights which accrue to it shall be conceived in terms of men's equal claim to the common good. To admit these principles is, indeed, to effect a revolution in the practice of the human race. It is to say forthrightly that institutions devoid of a moral basis are bound, sooner or later, to destruction, and to attempt, as a consequence, the provision of that basis. It is to deny

the right of the functionless owner to property at all; and to insist that the provider of capital, as distinct from the service of management, to an industry is not entitled to be residuary legatee of other men's enterprise. Anyone can see that the work of a doctor or a teacher, an engineer or a civil servant gives rise to a claim upon the social dividend; but it is impossible to defend the claim of a man who asks for maintenance by society merely because he has been careful in the selection of his parents. To defend him, indeed, is to strike at the root of all social logic; for it is in effect to say that idleness not less than effort is entitled to the reward of state-protection. It is a reward which it has done nothing to justify. Functionless property contributes nothing to the stock of social well-being; it merely receives service without return. There is not even evidence that its leisure is creative; there are not a score of scientists or men of letters who, in the last century and a half, have built their work simply upon the possession of hereditary wealth. The existence of this class of owners means a payment by society to men who do not enlarge the pool of production from which payment is to be made. It is simply indefensible, as Mill showed long ago, to admit a claim to prop-

erty based on the fact that someone, not the claimant, has sought to discharge his obligation to society.

The second great avenue of social change is the need to organize business as a profession. We must subordinate it to the public interest by giving to it an organized constitution with definite standards of performance in the same way that we insist upon a standard and a constitution in the law, in medicine, in engineering, and in architecture. We must, that is to say, exclude from business the operation of certain habits we do not hesitate to exclude from the professions; and we must insist upon the presence of others. We have learned to demand from any profession responsibility for the technical competence of its members. We have demanded the prohibition of certain types of conduct as inconsistent with the needs of a society dependent upon their art. We have abolished crude advertising, crude competition, speculative profit, secret commissions. We deny to the professions the right we permit to business men of assuming that the unregulated competition of the profit-making motive will produce service of the quality we require. The soldier, the sailor, the doctor, the engineer are compelled by the terms of their engagement to

think of service first, and personal gain afterwards. They may grow rich by the pursuit of their vocation; but their wealth is an incident, a by-product of their work, and not the end it serves. We do not mean by a great lawyer a rich lawyer, by a great surgeon a rich surgeon; greatness, there, is a function of service to the community. But a great business man is simply a man who has amassed a large fortune without regard to the way in which he has attained it.

There is not the least reason to suppose that the professionalization of industry is an impossible adventure. If we can demand standards of performance from the teacher in the school, equally we can demand standards from the builder who contracts to erect one. If we can insist upon certain ways of conduct from the doctor, we can equally demand certain ways of conduct from those who supply boots and shoes, furniture and clothing, food and housing. There is nothing degrading in business which should exempt it from the need to subject its possibility of gain to social principle. If we can professionalize the army and the navy, the postoffice and the railroads, we can professionalize anything the service of which is necessary to society. We are ashamed of a doctor who makes an igno-

rant mistake in diagnosis; we dismiss a naval officer from the service if he ignorantly loses his ship. In the professions, that is, our first assumption is the urgency of the social factor in the service offered. That, we recognize, is the element that makes it an honorable thing. No business can claim to be civilized that is not distinguished by similar standards.

What would be required to make industry, in this sense, a profession? Broadly, I think, three categories of change. There must be an alteration of the character of the owner of wealth from a person who controls the whole process of industry and is its residuary legatee to a person who is simply paid a fixed dividend for the use of his wealth. Exactly as the owner of government stock is not given as such the advantage of a budget surplus, and does not, as the owner of government stock, influence the policy of the ministry in office, so, similarly, the owner of industrial capital would be paid the market price, and no more, for the service rendered by the loan of his capital.

There would be an alteration, further, in the character of the control in business. Just as the rules of a profession are made, subject to the will of society, by its members, so must the rules of

industrial production be made by the working force of industry. Those rules doubtless cannot be made in quite the same way; industry is bound to remain less subject than, say, law to the will of an individual member. But once the functionless owner of capital is no longer the source of control, an industry becomes an intelligible entity, and the rules of its governance can be made in relation to its function. We can, that is to say, make the relation between a manager and a machine-tender intelligible by building it in terms of the function in which each is a necessary participant; but once the element of ownership is introduced, the allegiance of the manager is deflected away from the social context of production—the basis of rationality in business—over to the service he is compelled to offer to the profit-making motive. Where authority arises naturally out of function, it is intelligible and acceptable; the nurses who assist a doctor at an operation do not resent his orders because these flow directly from the purpose he is fulfilling. But where we strive, as we now strive, to introduce an element deprived of exactly the context which gives meaning to function, we are striving, as it were, to persuade the French peasant

of the *ancien régime* that a nobility which has privileges without function is really essential to his well-being and should receive the major portion of his produce. The peasant, doubtless, is slow enough; but he soon ceases to admit the case for his subordination.

We must also find a larger place than in the past for the social element in the industrial equation. That means at least three things. It means the socialized production of those elements in the common welfare which are integral to the well-being of the community. By socialization I mean that the production of certain essential commodities, of which electric power is an example, should not be left to the disposal of private profit. Whatever the method of organizing its control, the essential thing is that the profits earned therein should benefit the public and not the private undertaker. And it is necessary, in the second place, to introduce representative institutions both into socialized industries and those which remain under private management. There must be standard hours and standard rates of pay. There must be the replacement of autocratic managerial control (as in the hiring and firing of employees) by

methods of a more democratic character. The introduction of changes in machine technology and such matters must be removed from the sphere of an arbitrary will imposed from without those affected by the result to the sphere of consent. Promotion, the selection, for instance, of a foreman, must be built not upon the whim of a manager, but upon some approved combination of competence and agreement. And it is essential, finally, to insist throughout the field of industry upon qualification and publicity. Exactly as a man must offer proof of competence before he is admitted to the bar or to medical practice, before he can become the manager of a mine or the master of a ship, so he must offer similar proofs before he becomes head of a factory or a department store. We must make an end of chance and nepotism in business enterprise if it is to attain the dignity of a profession. Nor can we do without publicity. It is necessary in the public interest. It is necessary for those workers whose livelihood may well be jeopardized by the futility of their employer. It is essential for the prevention of dubious financial manipulation. The enforcement of publicity in business and the utilization of its results is the only path to the scientific organization of production

and its measurement in terms of a purpose which fits the needs of social life.

V

The permeation of the business world by professional standards would, I believe, result in civilizing it. The motives to effort of which it would then dispose would still be ample enough to call forth from the brain-worker the best of which he is capable. There is in most able business men a sense of their craft, a pride in efficient organization which, when not thwarted by the zest for profit, is exactly the same spirit as that productive of the best work in the army and navy, the medical and teaching professions, the bar and the public services. "The desire to distinguish himself in the service of the state," Lord Haldane has said, "is as potent a motive with the brain-worker as the desire to make a fortune. . . . If he thinks he will be recognized because of his public spirit and his devotion to duty, that public spirit and devotion to duty will make him do anything; there is no sacrifice of himself he will not make." That will always be true of the man who feels that he has important work to perform. Doubtless many will

remain to whom only the material motive is adequate; no system of organization ever secures the total result at which it aims. We cannot destroy slackness or selfishness in a social order by the stroke of the pen. But at least we can so reorganize the spirit of our industrial institutions that the minds of those who direct them are turned towards the qualities we need. We can offer the prospect of service to great ends in the faith that the higher the ideal the more lofty the performance; and that faith will appear reasonable to all who know the power of ideals.

I admit, of course, that criticism of business enterprise and the rights of property it sponsors is suspect enough in our time. It is wrong, it is subversive, it is futile, it is utopian. The present system, it is said, works well enough; and we are, at other times, bidden to remember the eternal laws of human nature. I hope that I do not forget those eternal laws, whatever they are; in any case, they are irrelevant to my argument. A system in which, in the most advanced countries, one-third of the population is continuously on the poverty line cannot really be deemed satisfactory. The existing rights of property, the existing habits of business represent, after all, merely a moment of historic

time. They are not today what they were a hundred years ago, and a century from now they will again be different. Our task, surely, is the conscious introduction of difference in terms of principles we approve. Change we know there will be. It is, surely, common sense to direct that change rather than drift aimlessly into it.

The present system stands condemned from almost any angle of analysis. It is psychologically inadequate because, for most, by appealing mainly to the motive of fear, it inhibits the exercise of those qualities which make for a rich life. It is morally inadequate also. For it confers rights upon those who have done nothing to earn them, and where those rights are related to effort, this, in its turn, has no proportionate relevancy to social value. It makes a part of the community parasitic upon the rest; and it deprives most of the opportunity to live amply and well. It is also economically inadequate because it fails so to distribute the wealth it creates as to offer the necessary conditions of right living to those dependent upon its processes. No one, I think, can survey the temper of the working class today and honestly conclude that the business man retains the allegiance of the multitude. Some regard him with hate; most regard him with

indifference. No considerable section thinks of him as genuinely concerned for the purpose a state must serve. He has lost the power to move his fellows in terms of a moral appeal.

I am not arguing that there is anything inherently unjust in the idea of private property; nor do I deny that it can be so held as creatively to express personality and continuously to enrich it. But if it is so to be held, it must be derived from a personal effort so organized as to add to the common welfare. It must never be so large in amount that its possessor exercises power merely by reason of its magnitude; and it must never be so small that its possessor is bound hand and foot to material appetite. The more equal its distribution the more likely is the contribution of the citizen to be assessed in terms of his social value, the more likely, accordingly, is he to make the effort to serve society well. And when property is viewed as the return to function it falls naturally into its proper place. It ceases to dominate our minds. It no longer breeds idleness and waste. It no longer produces that envy which is the nurse of faction, that sense of outlawry which goads to revolt. Men are not then set over against society, either feverishly snatching some chance opportunity of advantage, or seeking

to exploit it for some end which they know in their conscience to be mean and dishonorable.

I am not pleading for a unified world, drawn to some single pattern, nor for a society dominated by bureaucratic uniformity. I am urging only that if we wish to be civilized, we must transfer the emphasis of business life from the pursuit of money as its guiding principle to a due regard for the things money is to serve. There is room in such a conception for every diversity of type, the great economic explorer to whom risk is the salt of life, the bureaucratic official to whom routine is all, the artist-craftsman who will call no man master. But such a world would have a different scale of values from the present order.

It would think more of the creative artist because there will be more people with energy of soul to appreciate him. It will be less moved than we are by the man who asks to be judged by the size of the property he can accumulate. It may even, in its beginnings, appear a materially poorer society. For, almost inevitably, it will take time to train men to the habits born of new principles. Some will even refuse to be trained, and withdraw from their effort the spirit by which it is invigorated. It may become a society in which there

will be few wealthy men. Their disappearance will merely involve the absence of that conspicuous display which has made much of our social life seem crude and vulgar and tawdry. It is not an insignificant thing that every thinker of the modern time to whom the prophetic gift has been vouchsafed, Emerson and Carlyle, Thoreau and Ruskin, Marx, and Tolstoy, has been driven by his inner vision to demand a transvaluation of our values if the gift of civilization is to be preserved. As we stand now, our feet are near the abyss. We cannot avoid the danger of conflict so long as we fail to abolish the tyranny of man over man. We cannot abolish that tyranny where our idea of property confers rights without duties, claims without the obligation to serve. The condition of our well-being is fellowship; and this is possible only where men are won to a common service. For in that service that by which we live is born of justice and we gain the world by being willing to lose it.

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